JETS COMICS

藍(あい)より青(あお)し 3

KOU FUMIZUKI
文月晃

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白泉社

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藍より青し 3

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このお話は

大学生・花菱薫の元に突然現れた清楚な美少女は何と自分のことをずっと想い続けていた許嫁、桜庭葵だった。薫と葵、葵の後見人の雅、それに大学のサークル仲間のティナ・妙子の5人の共同生活の中でも、薫と葵の想いはゆっくりと深まってゆき…。

TINA KAORU TAEKO

AI-YORI AOSHI

KAORU & AOI

月2回刊　青年コミック誌
YOUNG ヤングアニマル
ANIMAL
毎月第2・第4金曜日発売

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI™

3

Kou Fumizuki

TOKYOPOP

scans by Kickthekitty

Edits by Evangeline

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI

文月晃

By Kou Fumizuki

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VOLUME 3

STORY & ART
BY
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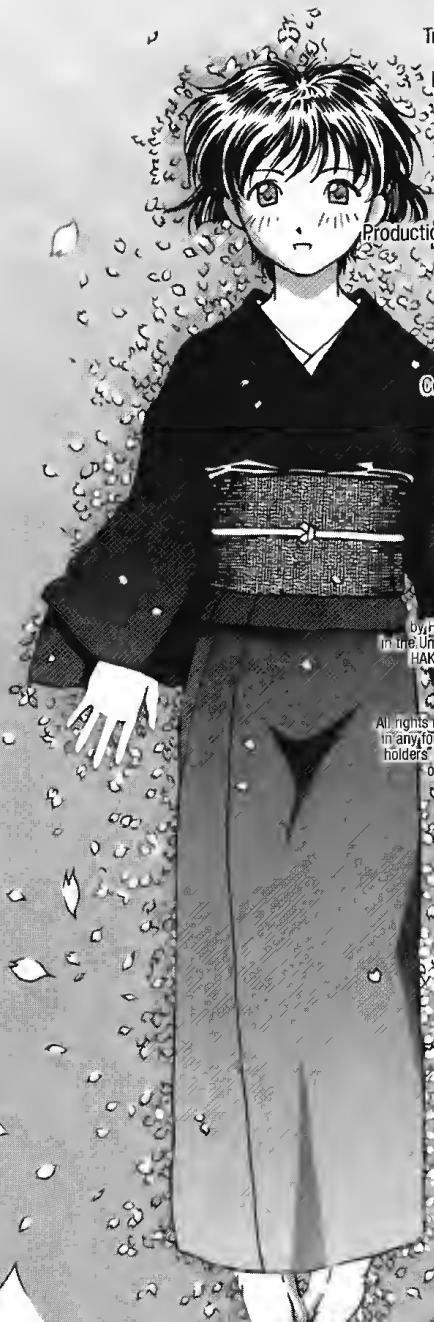

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藍(あい)より青(あお)し

AI YORI AOSHI™

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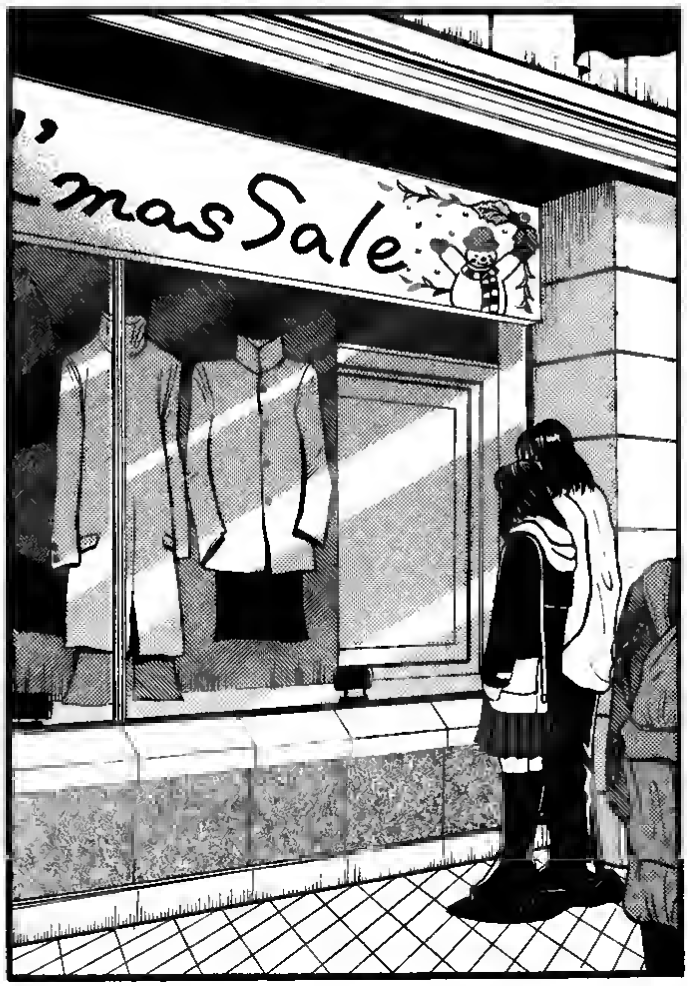
開催中
SALE
SALE
X'mas
X'mas
X'mas
X'mas


'mas Sale

OH MY! KAORU-SAMA, LOOK!!
EVERYTHING IS ALL DECKED OUT FOR CHRISTMAS.
EARS
エブンチュー

I GET TO SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH KAORU-SAMA...
エヘヘ

THERE ARE ONLY FOURTEEN SHOPPING DAYS LEFT, YOU KNOW!

WHAT WAS CHRISTMAS LIKE IN YOUR FAMILY, AOI-CHAN?!
HMM...
ON CHRISTMAS EVE, I ATE SHORTCAKE WITH MIYABI-SAN.
WELL, SINCE MY FAMILY OWNS A DEPARTMENT STORE, THIS IS THEIR BUSIEST TIME OF THE YEAR. MY MOTHER AND FATHER WERE ALMOST NEVER HOME UNTIL AFTER THE NEW YEAR...
I'VE GOT IT!!
ALTHOUGH IT WAS THE SAME FOR ME...
THAT'S A PRETTY SAD WAY TO SPEND CHRISTMAS EVE...

NO CRAPPY CHRISTMAS FOR US THIS YEAR. WE'RE GOING TO THROW A PARTY, AND WE'LL INVITE ALL OF OUR FRIENDS!
YOU'LL HAVE THE BEST CHRISTMAS YOU'VE EVER HAD!!
BUT IT MIGHT NOT BE A BAD IDEA TO SPEND IT BY OURSELVES...
KAORU-SAMA...

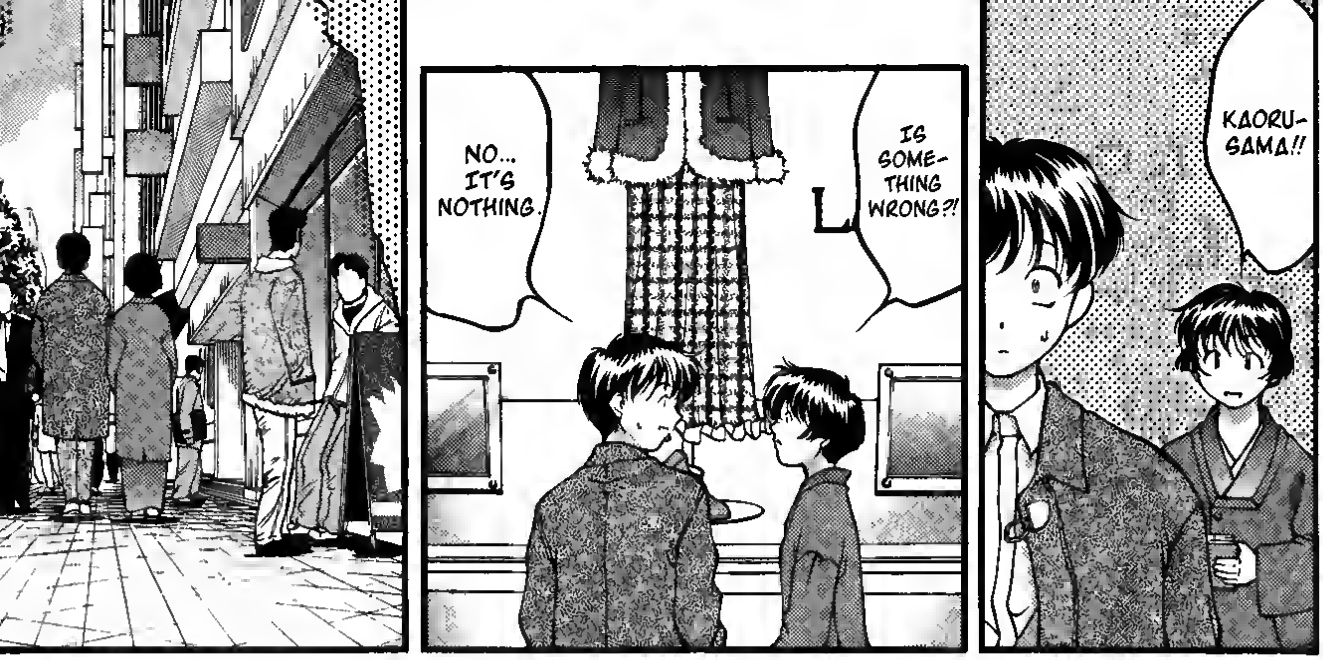
I LOVE YOU, KAORU-SAMA.

I-I'M SORRY. I WAS JUST SO HAPPY, I...
I can't believe I said that here...!
ぽっ

ボワ
AH...

UH...I'LL GO BUY US SOME-THING TO DRINK.
HRM...
WHY CAN'T WE ACT LIKE ALL THE OTHER LOVERS HERE...?
Even if we were allowed, I'm too shy...
IT WOULD PROBABLY FEEL GOOD TO EVEN JUST HOLD HANDS.
I BET AOI-CHAN WOULD LOOK ADORABLE IN SOMETHING BESIDES TRADITIONAL CLOTHES TOO.

I WONDER WHAT KIND OF STUFF SHE'D LIKE...
...NOT A BAD THING TO THINK ABOUT.
AOI-CHAN IN WESTERN CLOTHES...
.....

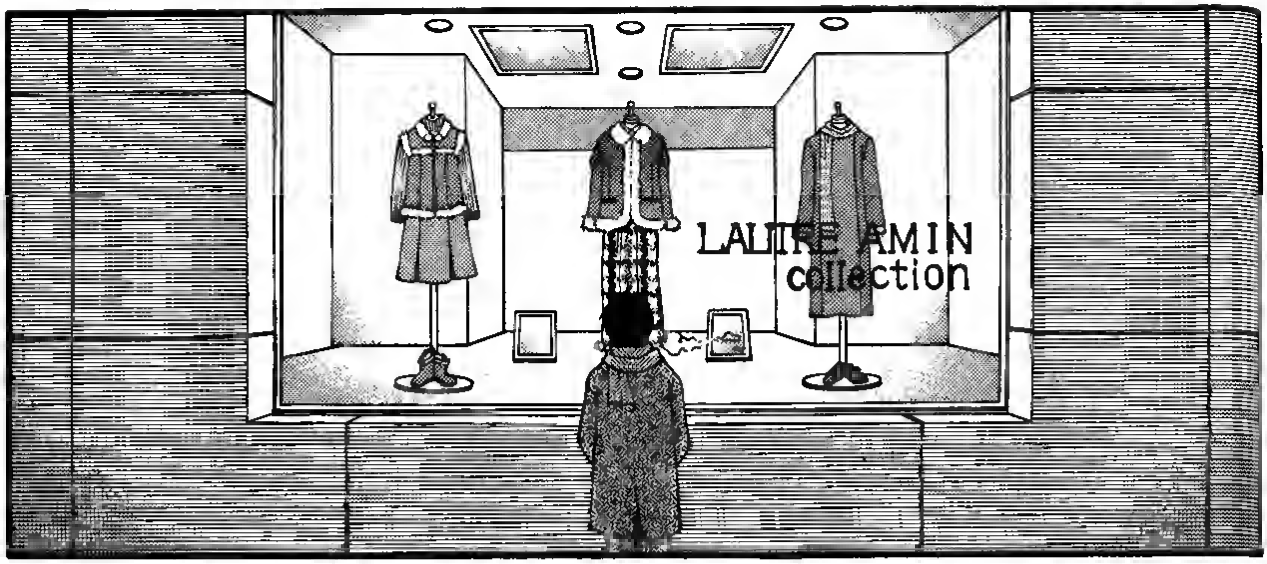

KAORU-SAMA!!
IS SOME-THING WRONG?!
NO... IT'S NOTHING.

I'VE USED UP ALMOST ALL THE MONEY I MADE LAST SUMMER.
GEH.....
FOURTEEN MORE SHOPPING DAYS, EH...?
General Account Bank
1234567

KAORU-SAMA! RISE AND SHINE! BREAKFAST IS READY!
KAORU-SAMA?
SORRY, AOI-CHAN.
I'VE GOT TO GET GOING.
THE SEMESTER IS NEARLY OVER, AND I NEED TO GET CRANKING ON MY FINALS.
NO TIME FOR BREAKFAST TODAY...!
OH... REALLY ...?
YUP. IT MIGHT TAKE ME ALL DAY TOO.
O-OKAY THEN. HAVE A GOOD DAY.

I...I'M HOME...
WHAT A LONG DAY YOU'VE HAD! LOOK HOW LATE IT IS!
OH, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU, KAORU-SAMA.
I'M SO WORN OUT, I DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY TO EVEN CHEW. SORRY... BUT I'M GONNA CRASH.
フラ～
I'VE KEPT YOUR DINNER WARM FOR YOU...
SNORE
AH... ...

BREAKFAST IS...
KAORU-SAMA?!
I'M LEAVING EARLY AGAIN TODAY. BUT I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT.
工業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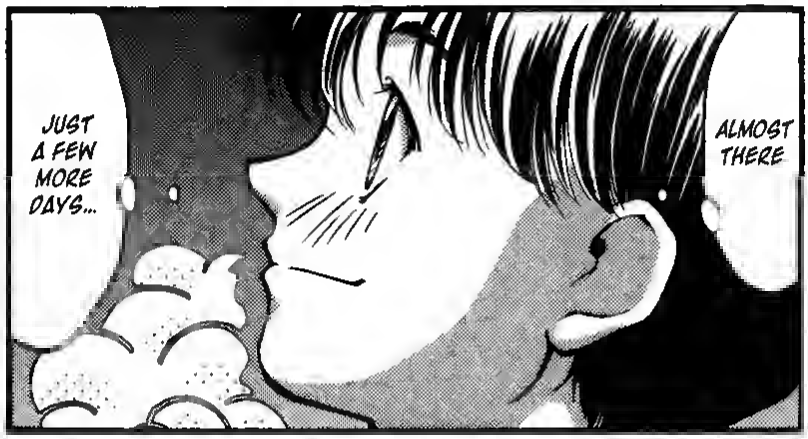
collection


JUST A FEW MORE DAYS...
ALMOST THERE

.....

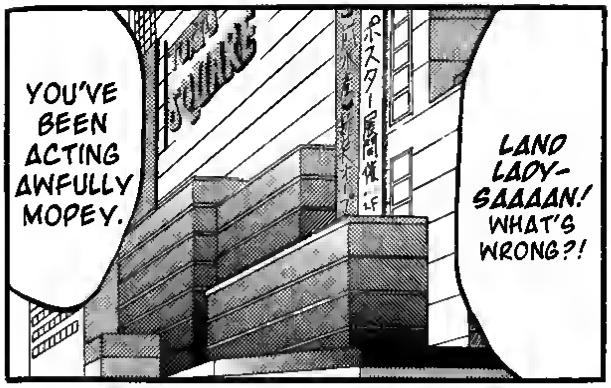
トントン

I'VE BARELY EXCHANGED A WORD WITH KAORU-SAMA THIS WHOLE WEEK...
.....
HE'S JUST SO BUSY WITH SCHOOL AND EVERY-THING.
I WONDER IF HE'S AVOIDING ME...

COULD HE BE TIRED OF ME ALREADY?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY HE WON'T LOOK AT ME...
HAVE I FAILED AS KAORU-SAMA'S FIANCÉE...?
OH, KAORU-SAMA!

ぼお
カチャ
カチャ
ぼ
カチャ
きゅ
きゅ
DON'T WORRY. LET'S JUST FINISH UP.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL CLEAN IT UP.
OH NO, WHAT HAVE I...
カチーン
USUALLY YOU'RE SO EFFICIENT... IT'S KIND OF SCARY, LIKE THE WORLD'S OUT OF ORBIT. ARE YOU OKAY?
This is the third break!

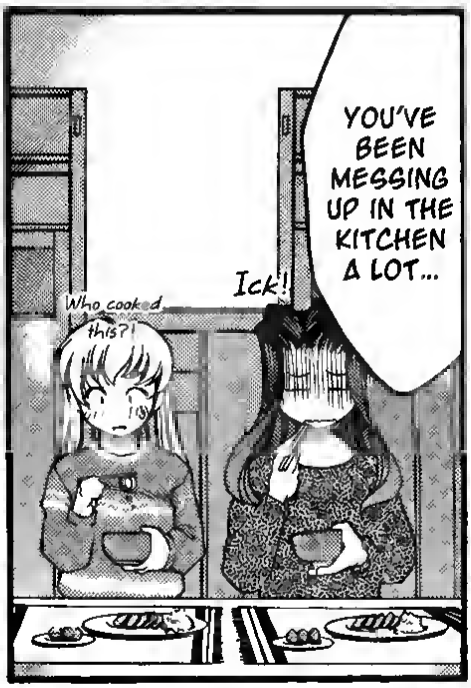
AOI-SAN
AOI-SAN
HEYYY!!
ぽ!!
モワ
モワ
モワ
Jin-guru beru!
Jin-guru beru!
I mean, that song is one of yours...
Suzu ga na-ruuu!
UM...TINA-SEMPAI, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE AN AMERICAN?!


YOU'VE BEEN ACTING AWFULLY MOPEY.
LAND LADY-SAAAAN! WHAT'S WRONG?!

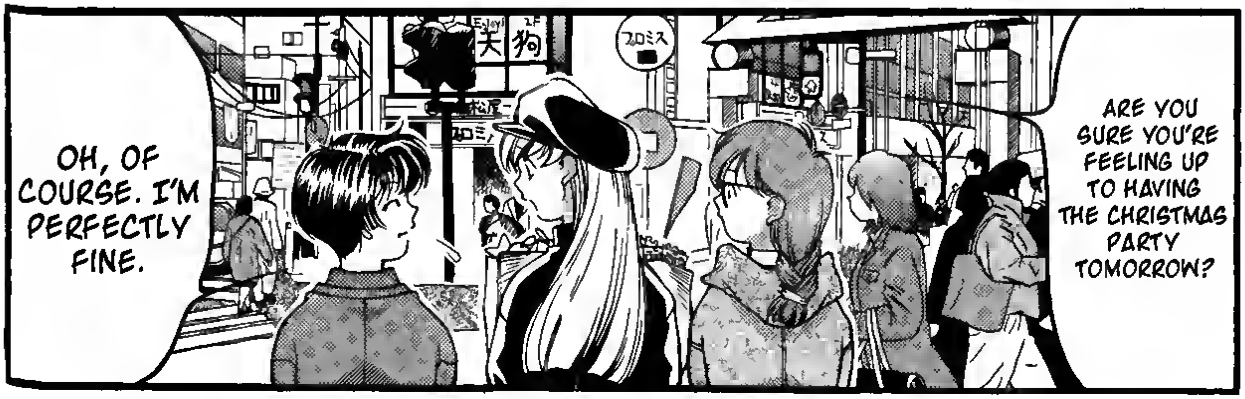
NOOO! I'M SORRY !!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN !?!

YOU KNOW ME... ALWAYS THE SAME...
HUH--? OH, NO... I'M ALL RIGHT.

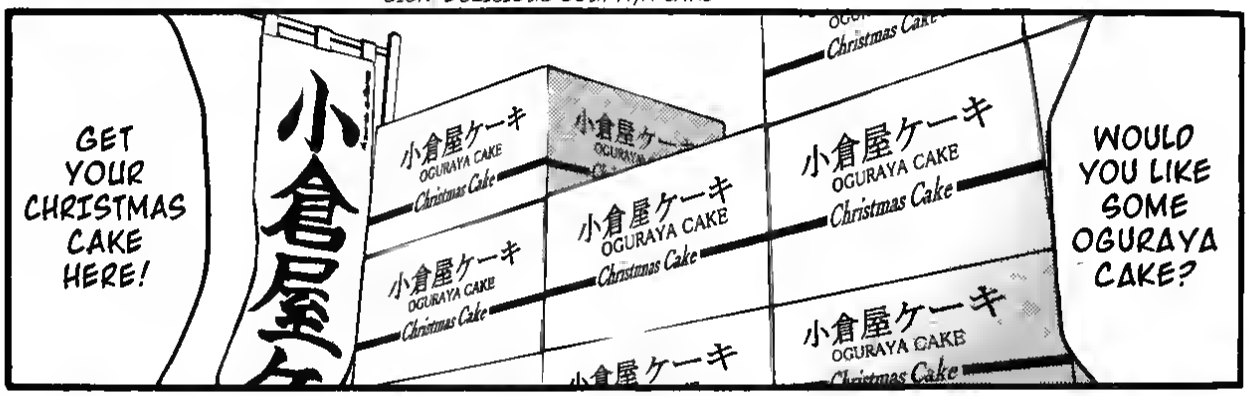
...AND SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE YOU'RE IN ANOTHER GALAXY. I HAVE TO SCREAM JUST TO GET YOUR ATTENTION.
LANDLADY-SAN!

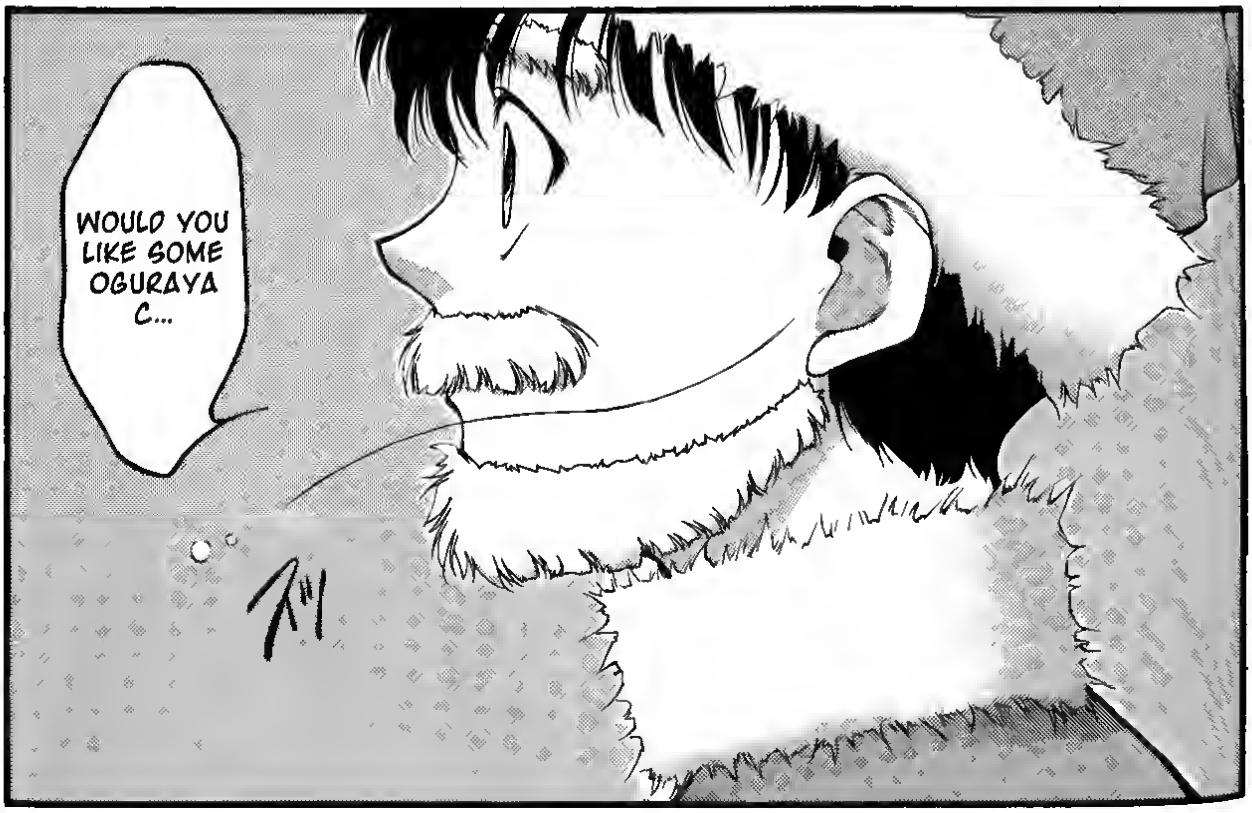

YOU'VE BEEN MESSING UP IN THE KITCHEN A LOT...
Ick!
Who cooked this?!

COME ON! DO YOU THINK WE'RE BLIND?


OH, OF COURSE. I'M PERFECTLY FINE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE FEELING UP TO HAVING THE CHRISTMAS PARTY TOMORROW?

*SIGN DELICIOUS OGURAYA CAKE

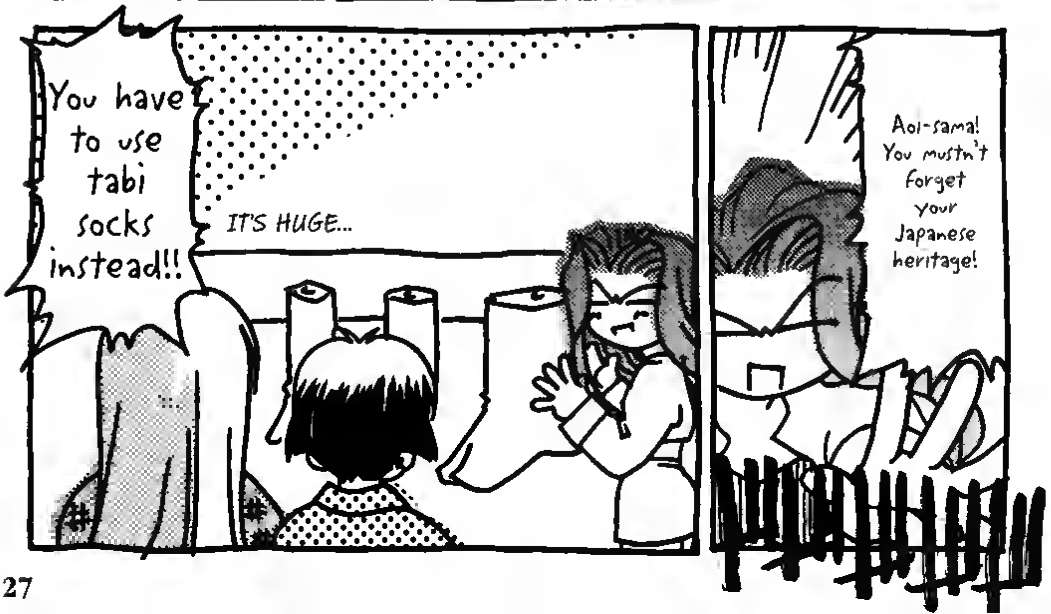




End of Chapter 20: Kokoroguma—Doubt

Ai-Ao Theatre part 5: Christmas

MAYBE I'LL GET ANOTHER KAORU-SHAMA
How fun! Maybe I'll hang one too.
If we hang stockings, Santa-san will leave presents in them!
What are you doing?!



藍より青し

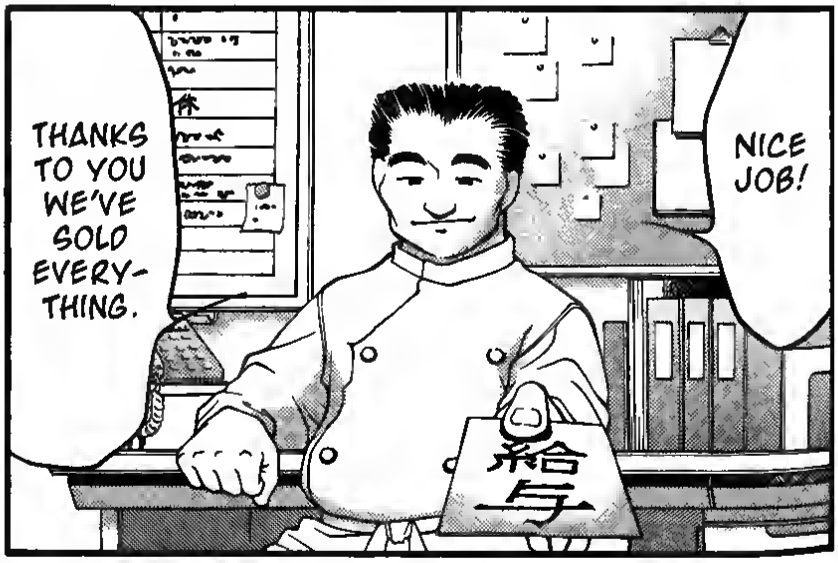
AI YORI AOSHI

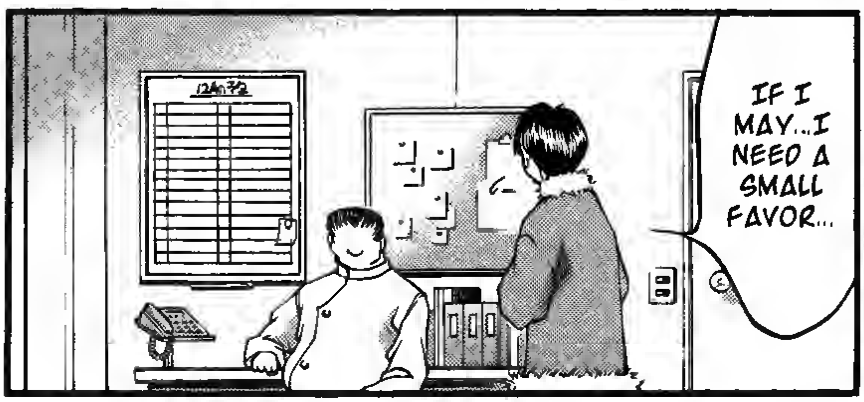
第二十一話　降誕祭―こうたんさい―

CHAPTER 21 KOUTANSAI CHRISTMAS

*SIGN OGURAYA CAKE

*SIGN SOLD OUT, THANK YOU





TAE-CHIIIIN! BRING ME THAT!
HOLD YOUR HORSES!

I WONDER IF HE'LL COME HOME EARLY TONIGHT...

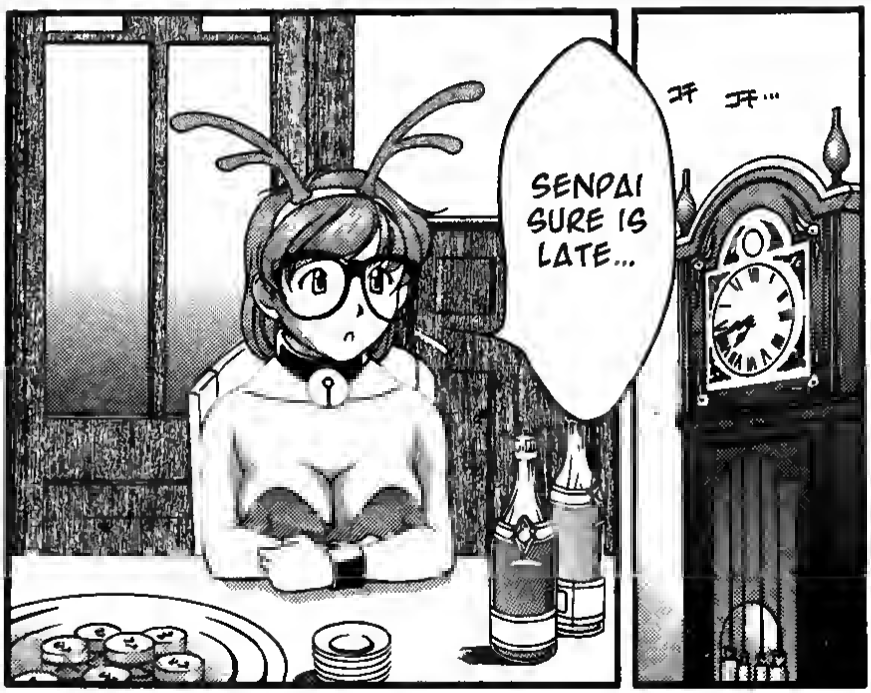
KAORU-SAMA...

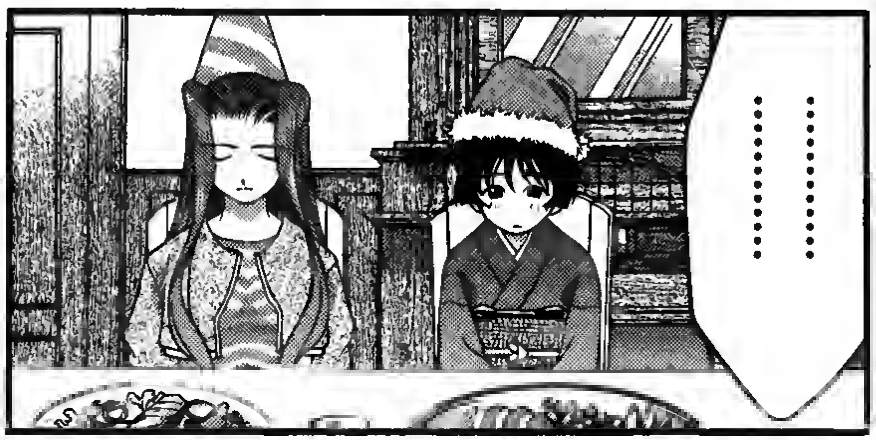
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY.
WE'VE ALREADY SOLD THAT ONE.

I CAN ALWAYS SPECIAL ORDER IT FOR YOU. IT'LL ONLY TAKE A MONTH OR SO.
MAYBE AT A LESS BUSY TIME OF YEAR... BUT IT'S A POPULAR ITEM.
THAT CAN'T BE!
NO!! DON'T YOU HAVE... ANY MORE IN STOCK ?!
I DON'T HAVE A MONTH! PLEASE! YOU HAVE TO TELL ME WHERE ELSE I CAN FIND THAT OUTFIT!!
PLEASE!!

Merry X'mas
AOI'S PRESENT...

I HAVE TO FIND IT...
コチ
コチ
コチ
THAT OUTFIT!!

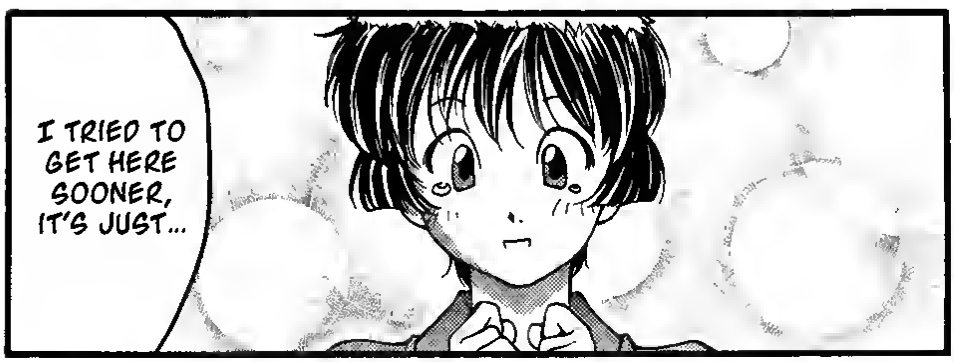

SENPAI SURE IS LATE...
ｺﾁ ｺﾁ…


……

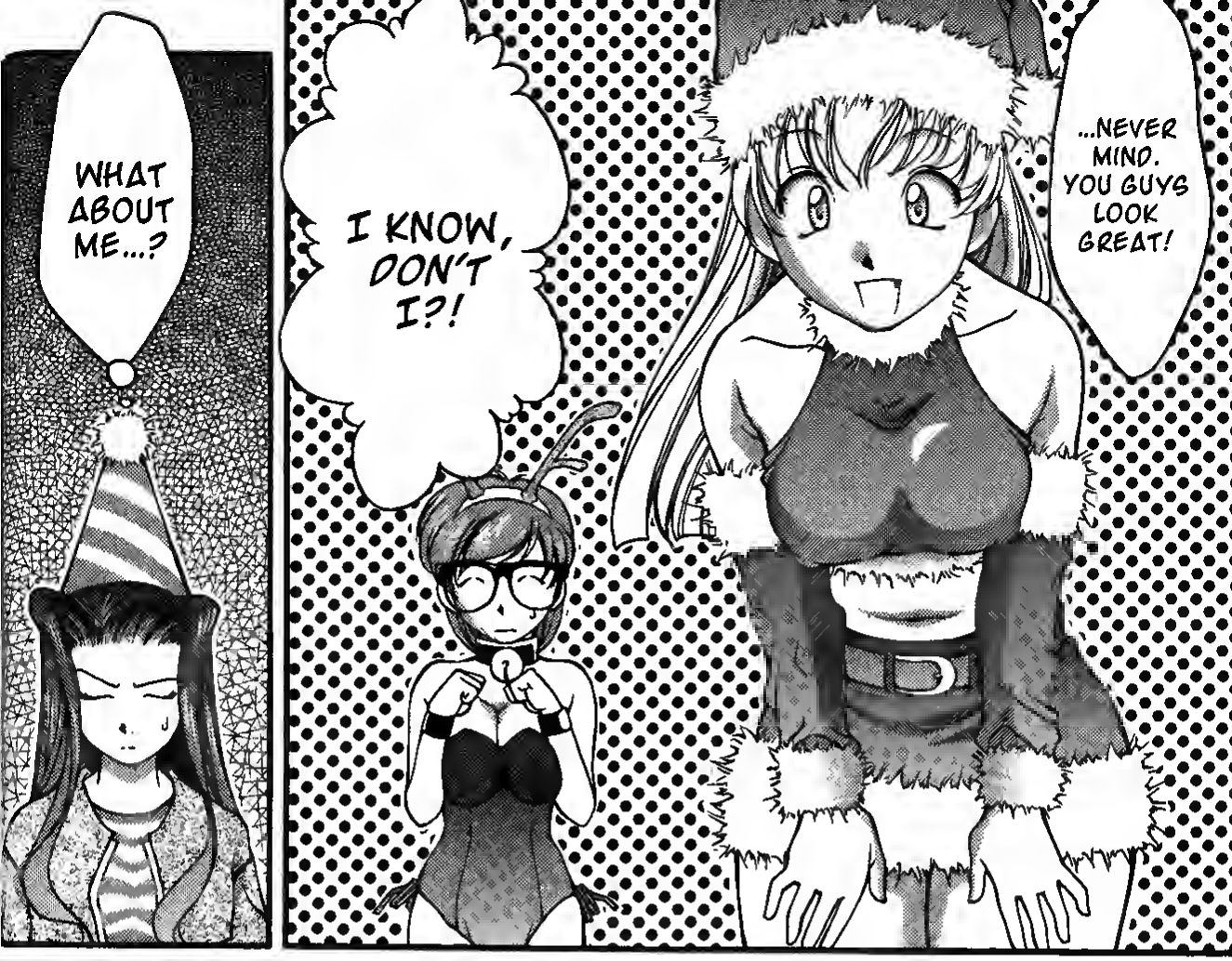
HO HO HO!
ARGH
I THINK YOU'VE ALREADY DUG IN FAR ENOUGH, YOU PIG!
WELL, HE SNOOZES, HE LOSES. CAN'T WE JUST DIG IN?
ピンポーン
カチャ
ばた
ばたばた
KAORU-SAMA?!
ビビビ!

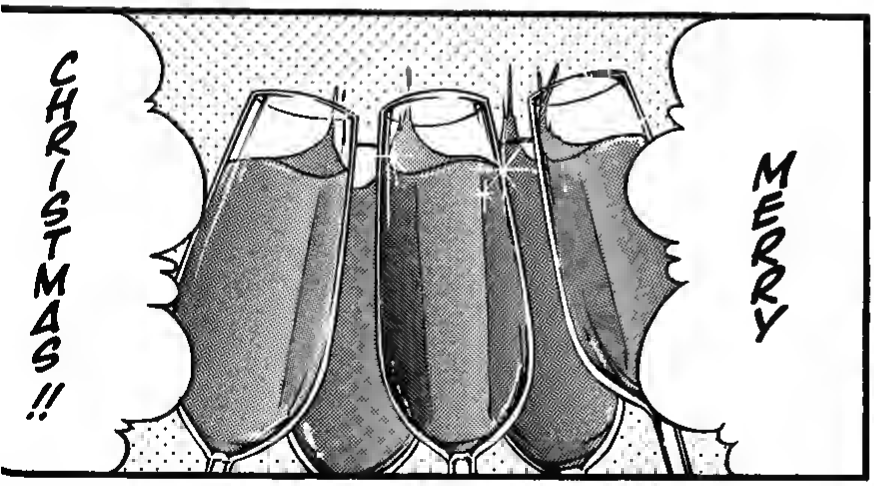
MERRY
CHRISTMAS!!

KAORU-SAMA!!
.....
SENPAI!!
YOU'RE LATE, KAORU!!

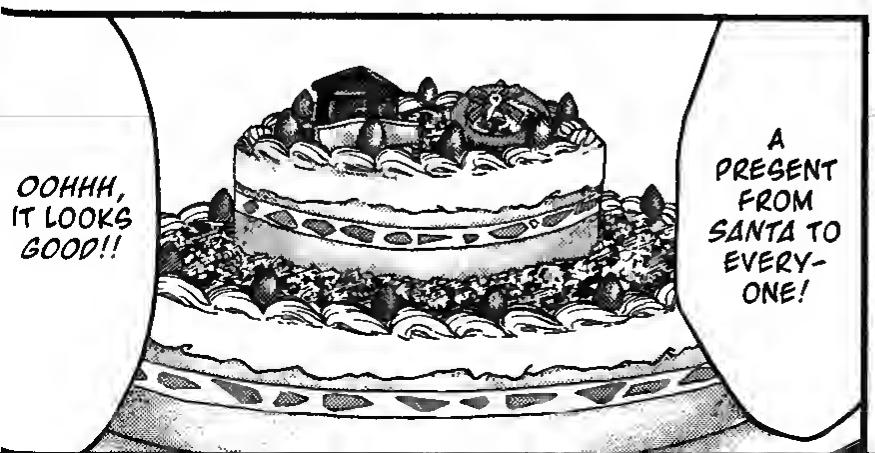

I TRIED TO GET HERE SOONER, IT'S JUST...

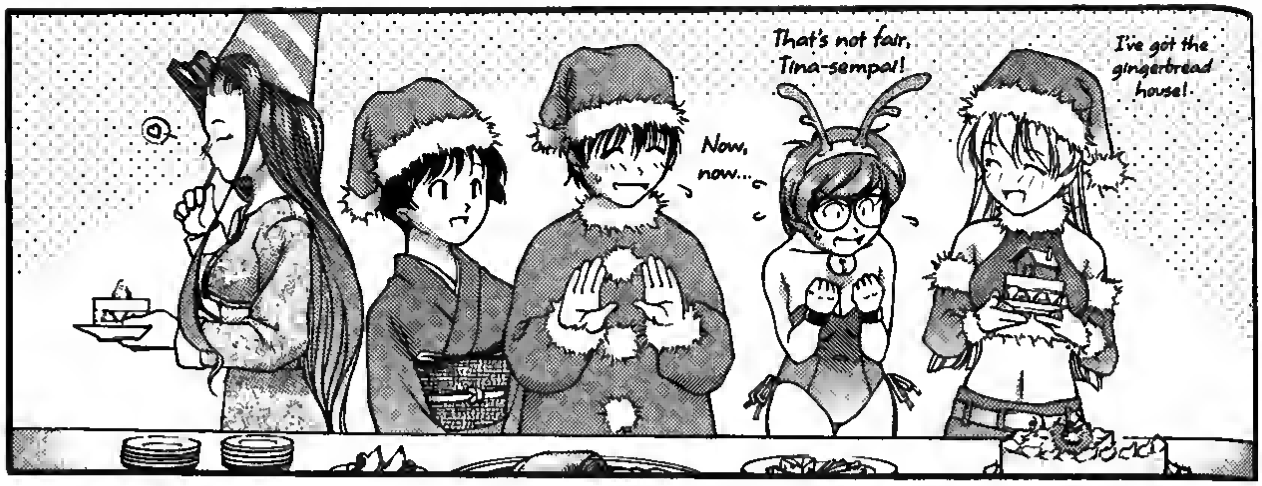
I'M SORRY ...

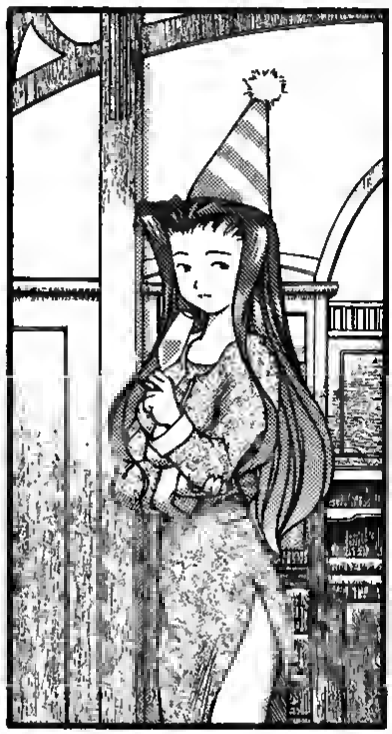

WHAT ABOUT ME...?
I KNOW, DON'T I?!
...NEVER MIND. YOU GUYS LOOK GREAT!


MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

ALL RIGHT, EVERY-ONE. GET YER BUTTS OVER HERE!


A PRESENT FROM SANTA TO EVERY-ONE!
OOHHH, IT LOOKS GOOD!!


That's not fair, Tina-sempai!
I've got the gingerbread house!
Now, now...



Have some more!
YUM!

HAHAHA
はははは
HAHAHA
はははは

UUNNNNGH.
WE'RE GOING HOME! COME ON!
TINA-SENPAI!
GOOD NIGHT.
MERRY CHRISTMAS.
I'LL BE WAITING UNDER THE BIG TREE IN THE BACKYARD AT ONE O'CLOCK.
AOI
HUH?!
I'LL BE WAITING UNDER THE BIG TREE IN THE BACKYARD AT ONE O'CLOCK.
AOI
TFF

KAORU-SAMA... IS THAT YOU?!
HUH?! OKAY...
UM... I WANT YOU TO... PROMISE... YOU WON'T LAUGH.
YEAH... WHAT'S WRONG?! AOI-CHAN.

UM... HOW... DO I LOOK?

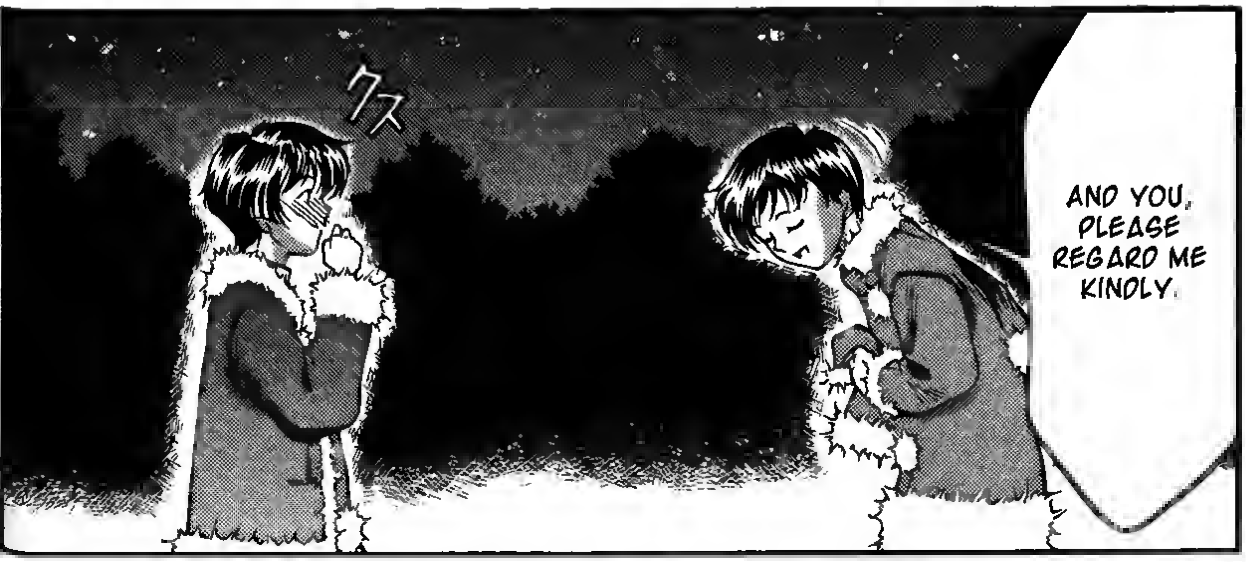
!!

I...WANTED YOU TO BE HAPPY, KAORU-SAMA...
I SAW YOU STARING AT THIS OUTFIT IN A WINDOW...
AOI-CHAN, THOSE CLOTHES ...
WHOA!
カくん
AH!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?!
EEP! PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT MY FEET!
I FORGOT TO BUY MATCHING SHOES...!
WHA--?!
ニコ
.....

I THINK THESE GO WITH IT...
COULD IT BE...? KAORU-SAMA!!
EH?! KAORU-SAMA, WHY DO YOU HAVE THOSE SHOES...?
!!

YOU LOOK FANTASTIC, AOI-CHAN!!
YUP...IT'S JUST THE WAY I PICTURED IT.
.....
THANK YOU. I'M SO HAPPY YOU APPROVE ...
KAORU-SAMA...

I KNOW I CAN BE SILLY AND NAIVE, BUT I HOPE YOU WILL THINK OF ME FONDLY NEXT YEAR, EVEN MORE THAN YOU HAVE IN THIS ONE.


クス
AND YOU, PLEASE REGARD ME KINDLY.

WOW... IT'S SO PRETTY!
SNOW!
AH... KAORU-SAMA.

End of Chapter 21: Koutansai—Christmas

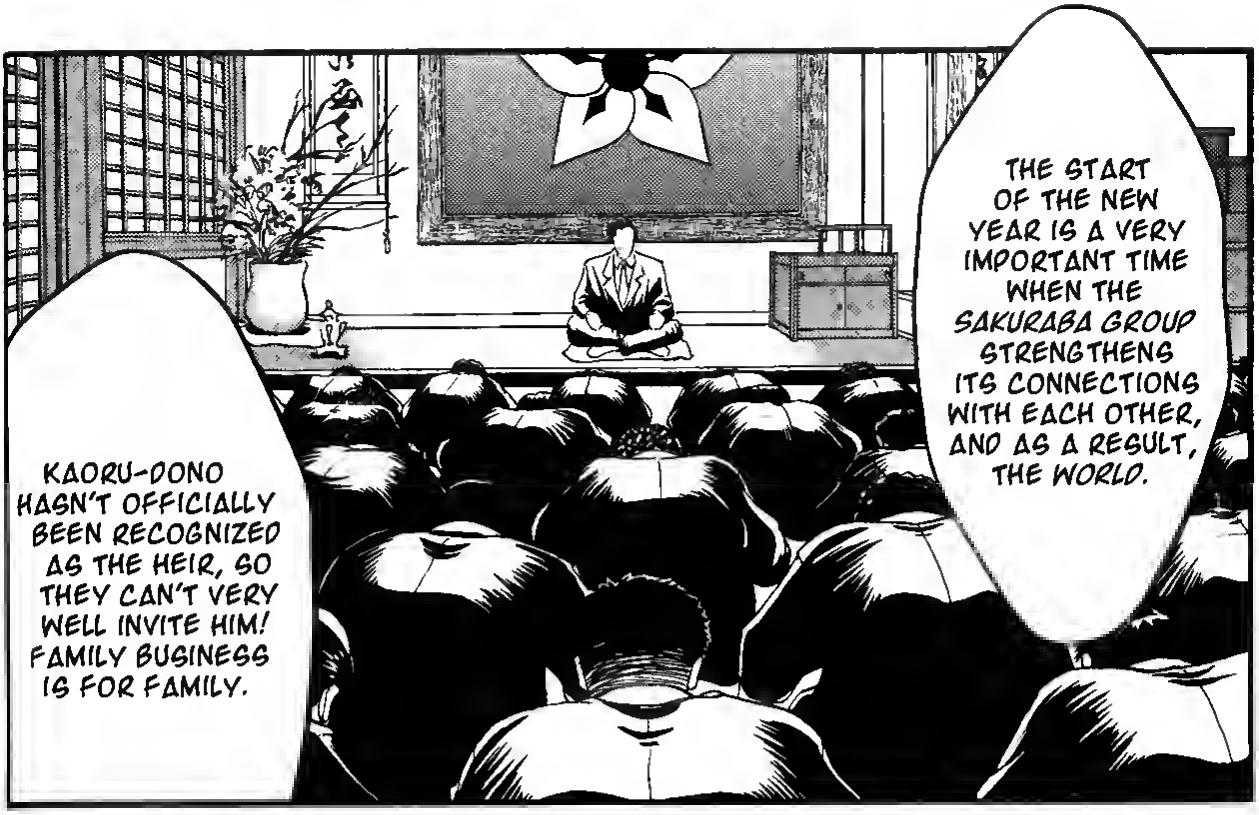
藍(あい)より青(あお)し

AI YORI AOSHI CHAPTER 22 OOTSUGOMORI NEW YEARS EVE

第二十二話　大晦―おおつごもり―

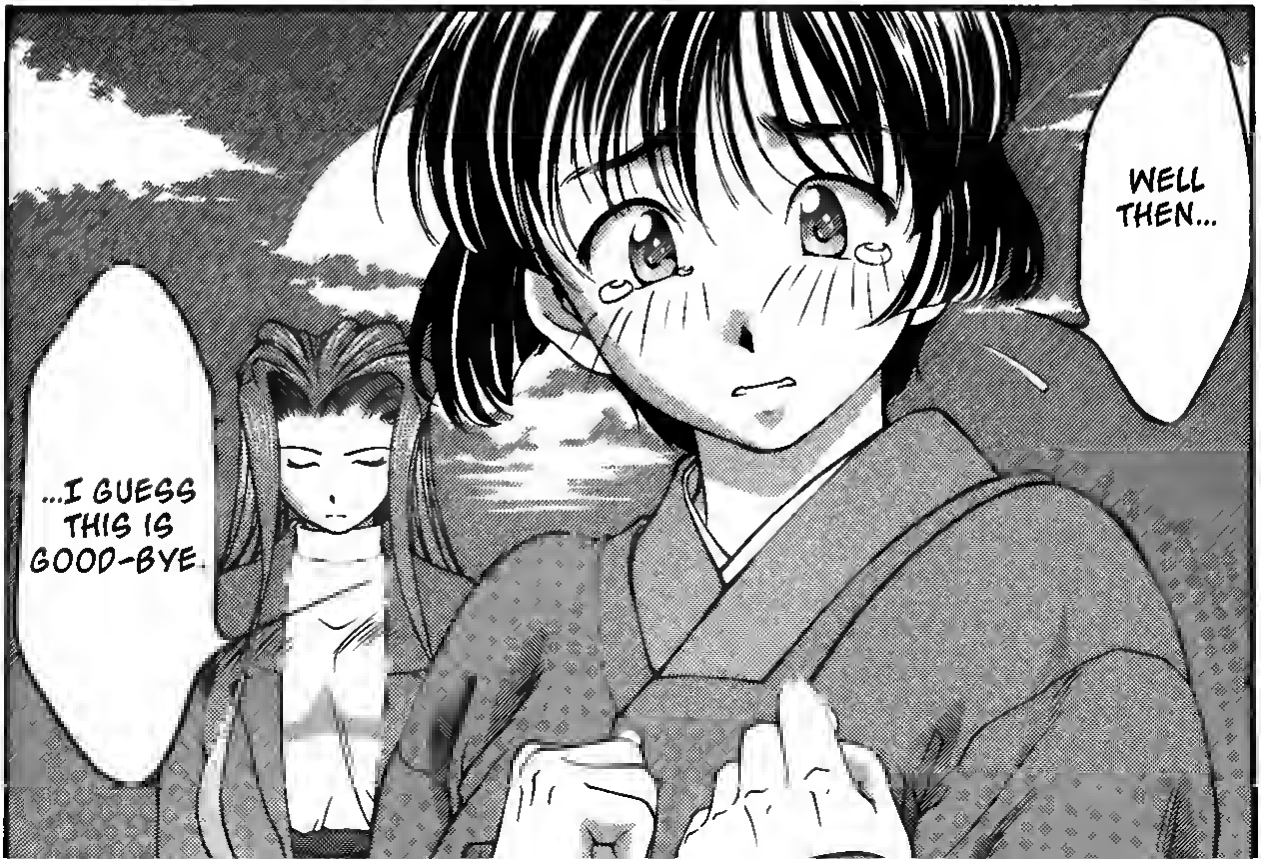
KAORU-SAMA, PLEASE...
...YOU MUST TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
.....
AOI-CHAN...

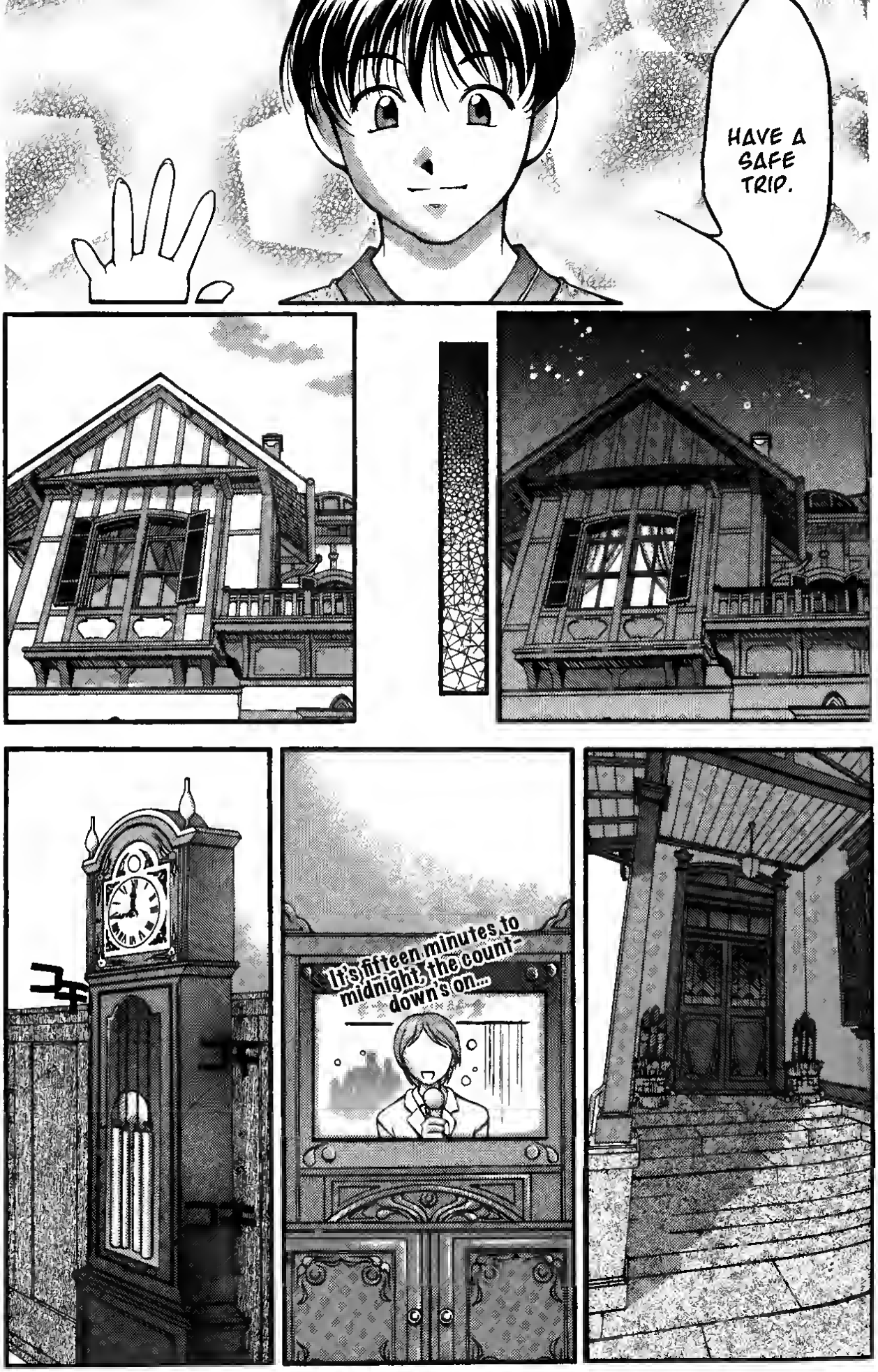
YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO BE GONE THREE DAYS. IT'S NOT WORTH GETTING SO UPSET...
.....
みゅ～～～～～
AND WATCH THE SUN COME UP FOR THE FIRST TIME TOGETHER.
ふぇ
BUT I WANTED US TO SHARE THE FIRST SOBA OF THE NEW YEAR!
GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, AOI-SAMA.


THE START OF THE NEW YEAR IS A VERY IMPORTANT TIME WHEN THE SAKURABA GROUP STRENGTHENS ITS CONNECTIONS WITH EACH OTHER, AND AS A RESULT, THE WORLD.
KAORU-DONO HASN'T OFFICIALLY BEEN RECOGNIZED AS THE HEIR, SO THEY CAN'T VERY WELL INVITE HIM! FAMILY BUSINESS IS FOR FAMILY.

OKAY. DON'T WORRY.
FEEL FREE TO STAY IN THE MANSION.

TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE WHILE WE'RE AWAY, KAORU-DONO.


WELL THEN...
...I GUESS THIS IS GOOD-BYE.


HAVE A SAFE TRIP.
It's fifteen minutes to midnight, the count-down's on...

*special food for New Year's

*TRANSLATION: "OH, KAORU! GOOD MORNING!!"

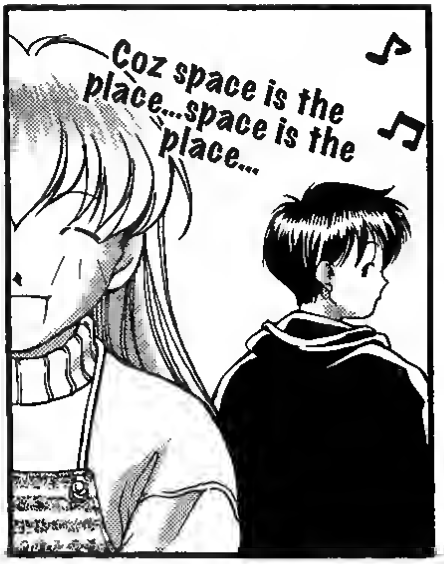
.....
I SCREWED UP AND NEVER GOT MY TICKET BACK TO THE STATES. I HAD TO FLY STANDBY!
I got really hungry, too!
I HUNG AROUND THE TERMINAL ALL NIGHT HOPING SOMEONE WOULD CANCEL, BUT IT LOOKED LIKE MY LUCK WAS RUNNING OUT, SO I GAVE UP AND CAME BACK HERE. NO NEW YEAR'S IN AMERICA THIS YEAR.
--HEY, WHERE ARE AOI AND THAT STUFFED SHIRT, ANYWAY?
DON'T SWEAT IT. GET THE LANDLADY TO WHIP UP SOME MO--
Your o-
WHat-y?
MY OSECHI...

OH. NO WONDER...
AOI-CHAN WENT HOME WITH MIYABI-SAN. SHE MADE THAT DISH FOR ME SPECIAL!
I GUESS THAT MEANS IT'S JUST YOU AND ME FOR THE HOLIDAY, EH?
JUST THE TWO OF US...
11

WH.. WHAT?!
KAORU... ...
ばた ばた ばた
...SINCE WE'RE BOTH HUNGRY, WHY DON'T I MAKE IT UP TO YOU BY MAKING US A TREAT?
THAT STUFF BARELY FILLED ME UP, SO...
WH- WHAT AM I SO NERVOUS ABOUT?
YOU'RE JUST BEING STUPID! CUT IT OUT!!
THERE'S NOTHING TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT!

KAORUUU!!
I'M SORRY, BUT CAN YOU ROLL UP MY SLEEVES?
HUUHH?!
I'M SOAKED!
AAAGHH! HURRY!
THANKS, KIDDO!!

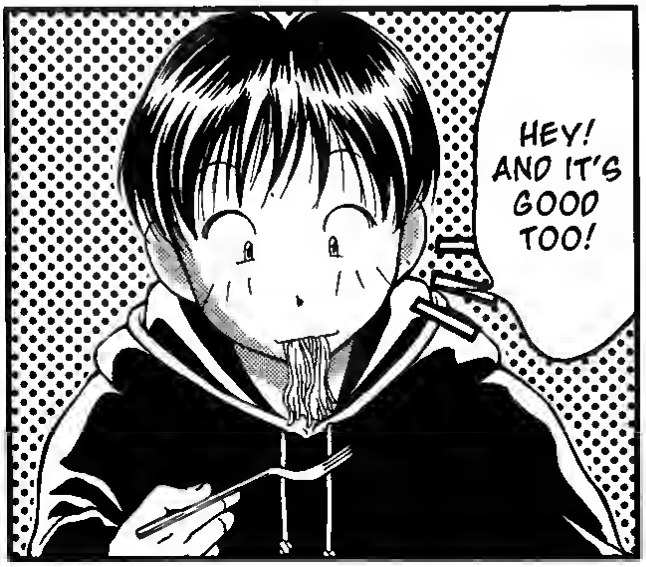
...ALWAYS SMELLED SO DELICIOUS?
HAS TINA...


Coz space is the place...space is the place...

Spaghetti from a can, one serving!!
SORRY FOR THE WAIT!!
WHOA! YOU ACTUALLY MADE REAL FOOD!

No, stop!

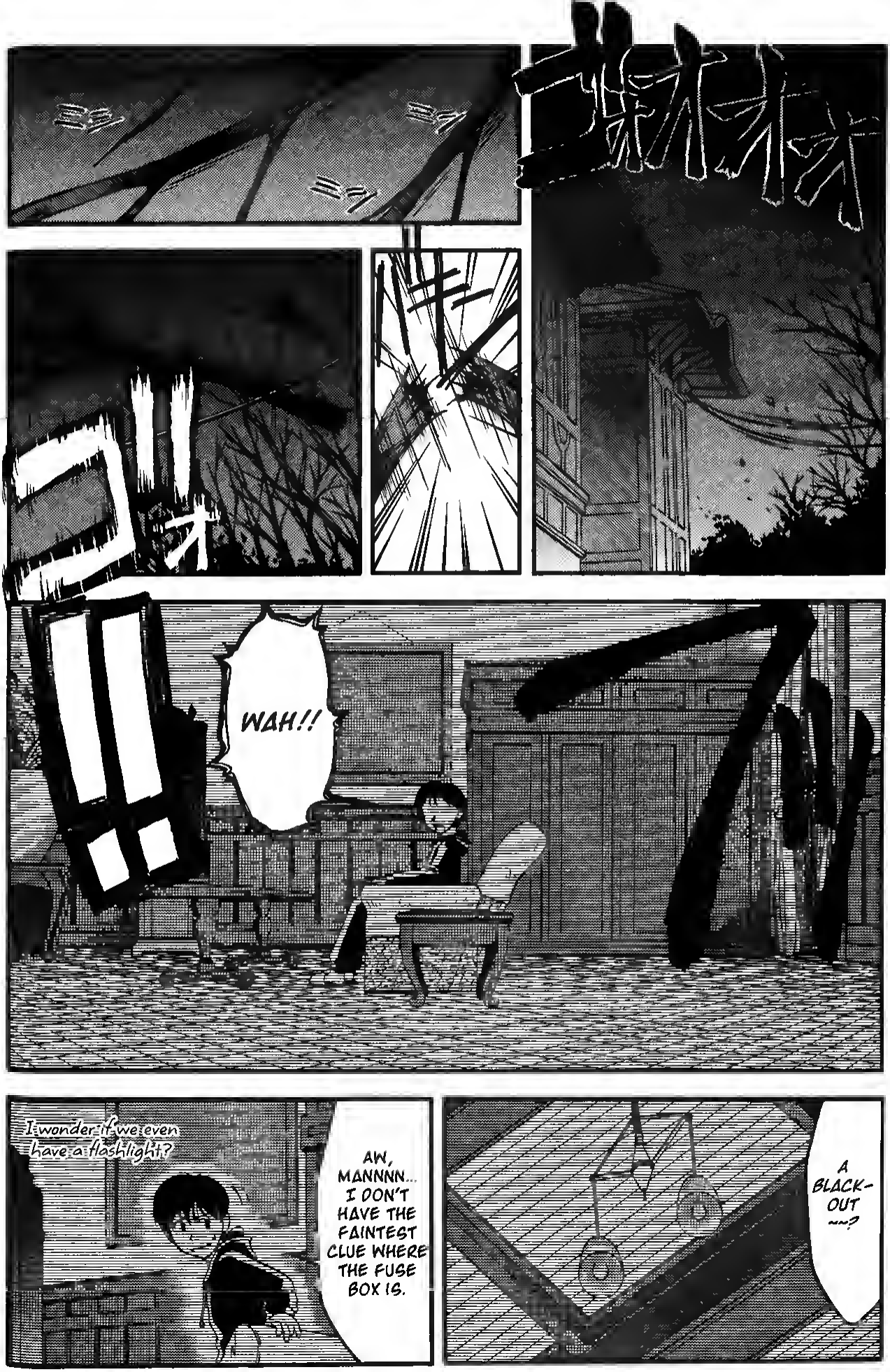
IT'S BETTER THAN ME! I CAN'T EVEN MAKE TOAST!
YEAH, I'M PRETTY HANDY WITH A CAN OPENER!


HEY! AND IT'S GOOD TOO!

KAORU... DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?! MY FEELINGS...
STILL, IF YOU'RE HANDY AROUND THE KITCHEN LIKE THIS, WHY NOT GET YOUR OWN PLACE?
HA HA HA!
I... I...
だって だって
EH?!
THERE, I SAID IT! I'M FREE!
I HATE HAVING TO COOK EVERYDAY.
もしⅡ
YEAH, I GET YA...
がんばり...
もしⅡ

THE BATH'S READY. YOU CAN GO FIRST
OKAAAY!
TINA !!
Taking a bath.
Taking a bath.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE TAKING A BATH?
HUH ?!
?!
EH HEH HEH
UH, YEAH ...
AHHHHH!

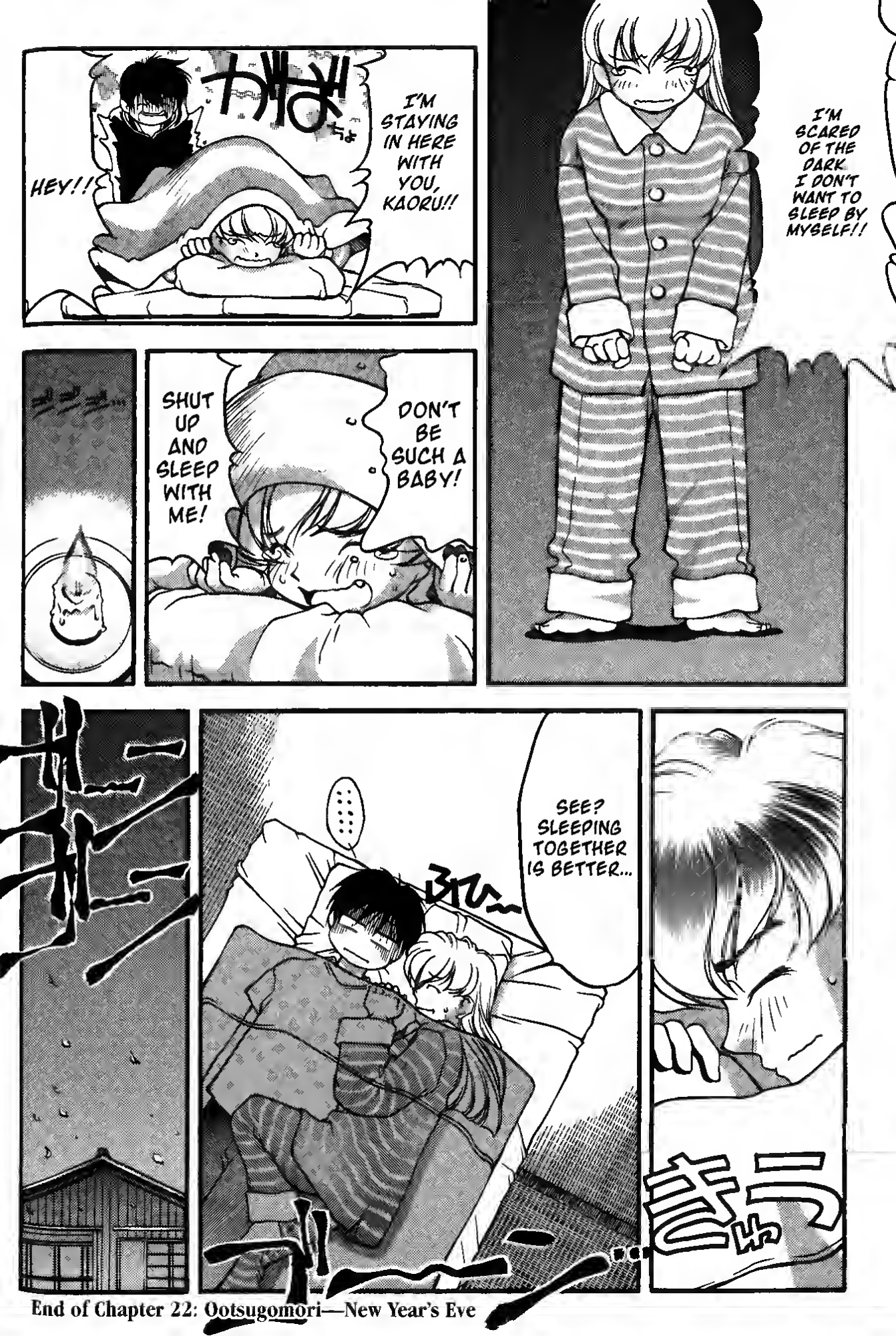

WAH!!
I wonder if we even have a flashlight?
AW, MANNNN... I DON'T HAVE THE FAINTEST CLUE WHERE THE FUSE BOX IS.
A BLACK-OUT ~~?

TINA!
TINA! IS EVERY-THING OKAY--?!
OH! I SHOULD CHECK IF TINA'S ALL RIGHT...!
TINA?!
.....
KAORUUUU!!
ONNAA?!

I WAS TOTALLY FREAKING OUT!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW SCARY IT WAS IN THERE ALL BY MYSELF!!

WAAAAH!
Kaoruuu~~
GEH! TINA'S NAKED?! AND WET!

STAY WITH ME! DON'T GO!!
AAAHHH, DON'T PUT MY HAND THERE!!
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!!
SO SCARY!
Like a slasher flick!
I THINK WE'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE POWER COMES BACK...
YOU CAN HAVE THE CANDLE. YOU CAN TAKE IT BACK TO YOUR ROOM WITH YOU.
Coz you're all right, right?!
NO...
HUUHH ?!


HEY!!
I'M STAYING IN HERE WITH YOU, KAORU!!
I'M SCARED OF THE DARK. I DON'T WANT TO SLEEP BY MYSELF!!
SHUT UP AND SLEEP WITH ME!
DON'T BE SUCH A BABY!
SEE? SLEEPING TOGETHER IS BETTER...

End of Chapter 22: Ootsugomori—New Year's Eve

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI

第二十三話　三朝―さんちょう―

CHAPTER 23 SANCHOU
FIRST THREE DAYS OF THE YEAR

ぼ～～～っ
……
チチチ…
TINA'S ALREADY AWAKE...?
WHA--?!

I ALMOST THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO EXPLODE. DON'T KNOW HOW I DIDN'T...
IT WAS HARD ENOUGH WITH AOI-CHAN...
...BUT IT WAS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT KIND OF HARD WITH TINA.
Yawn...

G-GOOD MORNING ...
OH, KAORU! GOOD MORNING !!
KAORU ...
GIVE ME ONE MORE MINUTE...
...AND I'LL HAVE BREAK-FAST ALL READY FOR YOU.
UH, SURE...
THANKS FOR LAST NIGHT...

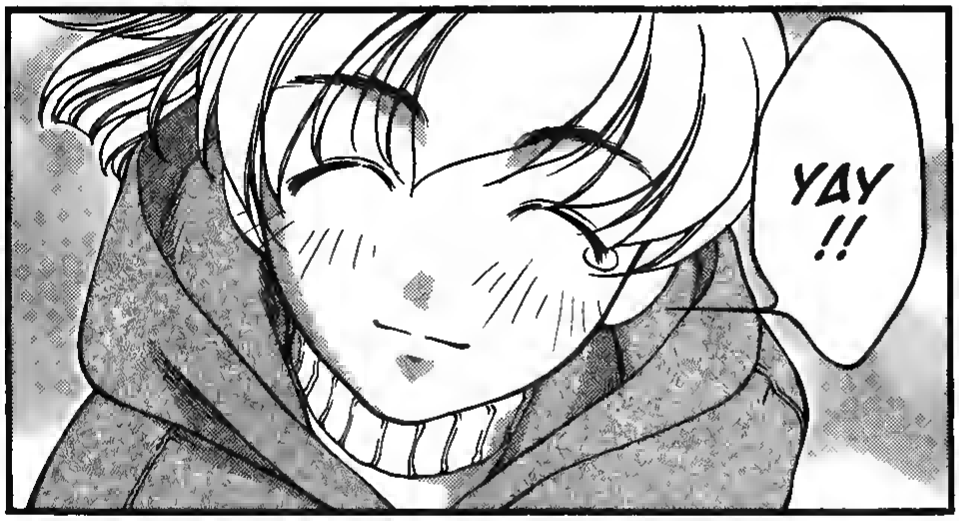
giggle
HOW'S IT GOING, KAORU?!

WE SHOULD HAVE POWER AGAIN SOON.
THANK GOODNESS... I DON'T THINK I COULD HAVE STOOD ANOTHER NIGHT IN THE DARK.
You'd have to take care of me again...
Please, not that!
HEY, WHILE WE WAIT, LET'S GO TO THE TEMPLE FOR THE NEW YEAR CEREMONIES!
EH ?!
NOW ?!
YEAH! HUSTLE! HUSTLE!!

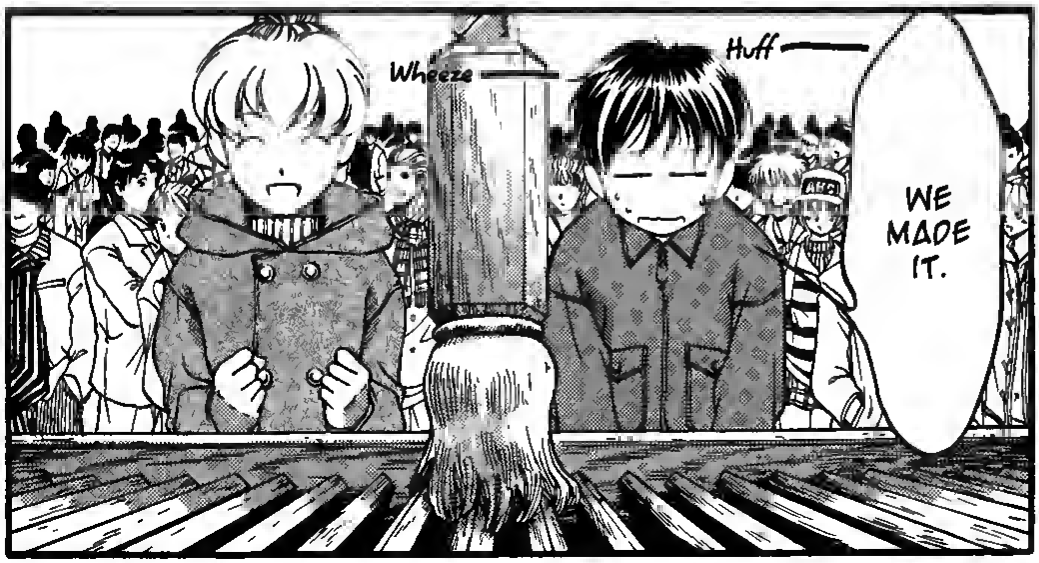
*CHARMS
ガヤ
ガヤ
TINA!!
STOP!!
ガヤ
ガヤ
I WANT TO GO UP FRONT AND RING THE BELL!!
NOOOO!!
CAN'T WE JUST MAKE OUR OFFERING FROM HERE?

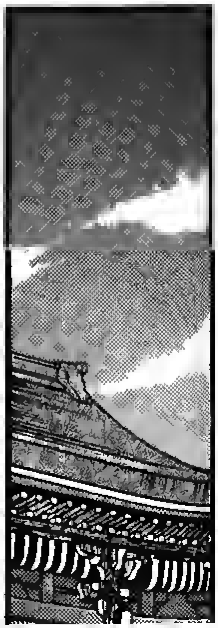
I WANNA RING THE BELL!!
I WANNA RING THE BELL!!
ALL RIGHT ALREADY !!
BECAUSE I USED TO RING IT WITH MY MOM AND DAD IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE HAD THE CHANCE!
WHY DO YOU WANT TO RING THE STUPID BELL SO BAD?!
I CAN'T PASS THIS CHANCE UP. I WANNA DO IT!
どしょ
どしょ
……
NNNGH
CAN'T BREATHE

LET'S RING IT GOOD AND RING IT LOUD!
OKAY, THEN, LET'S GO FOR IT!

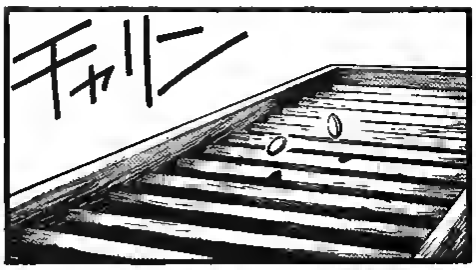

YAY!!

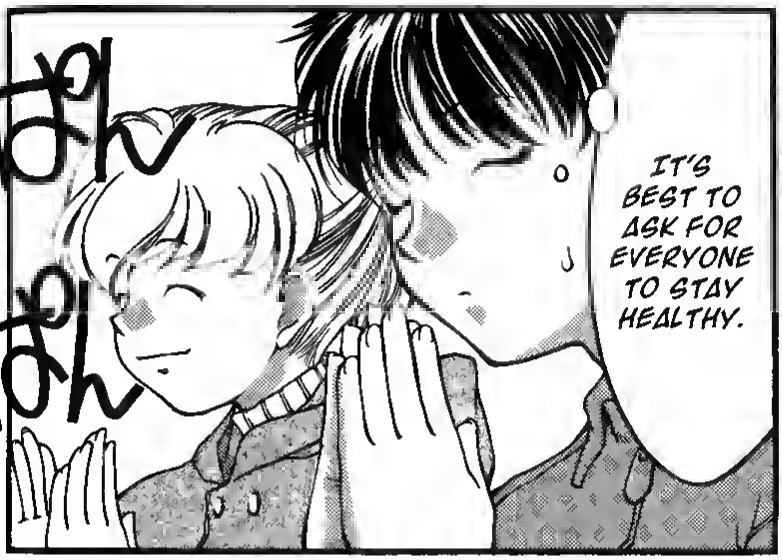
EXCUSE US!
SORRY!


Wheeze
Huff
WE MADE IT.



UM... WHAT SHOULD I WISH FOR...?

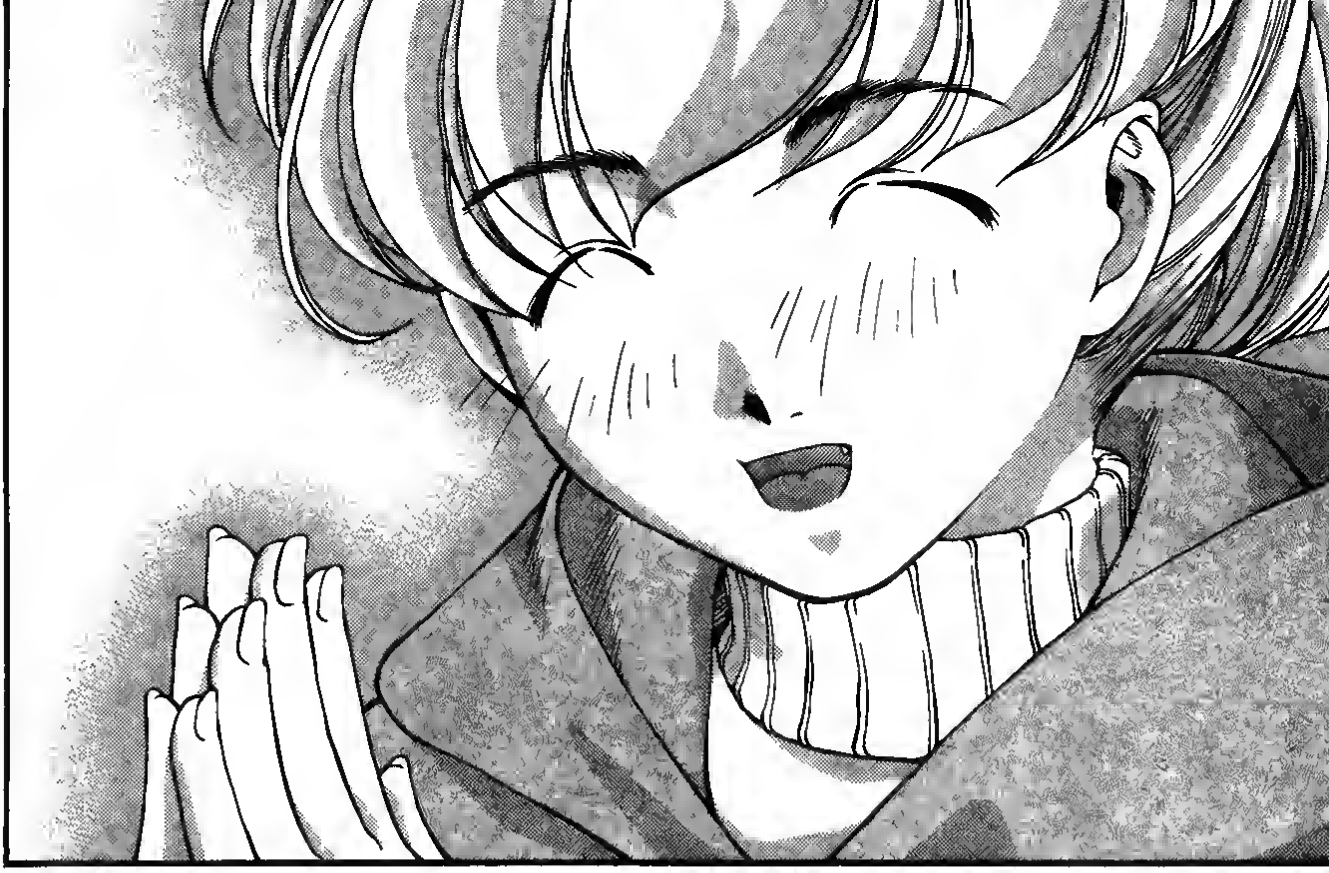

チャリン


IT'S BEST TO ASK FOR EVERYONE TO STAY HEALTHY.
ぱん
ぱん

ガラン ガラン

MAY THE EARTH BE HAPPY AND LIVE AT PEACE !!

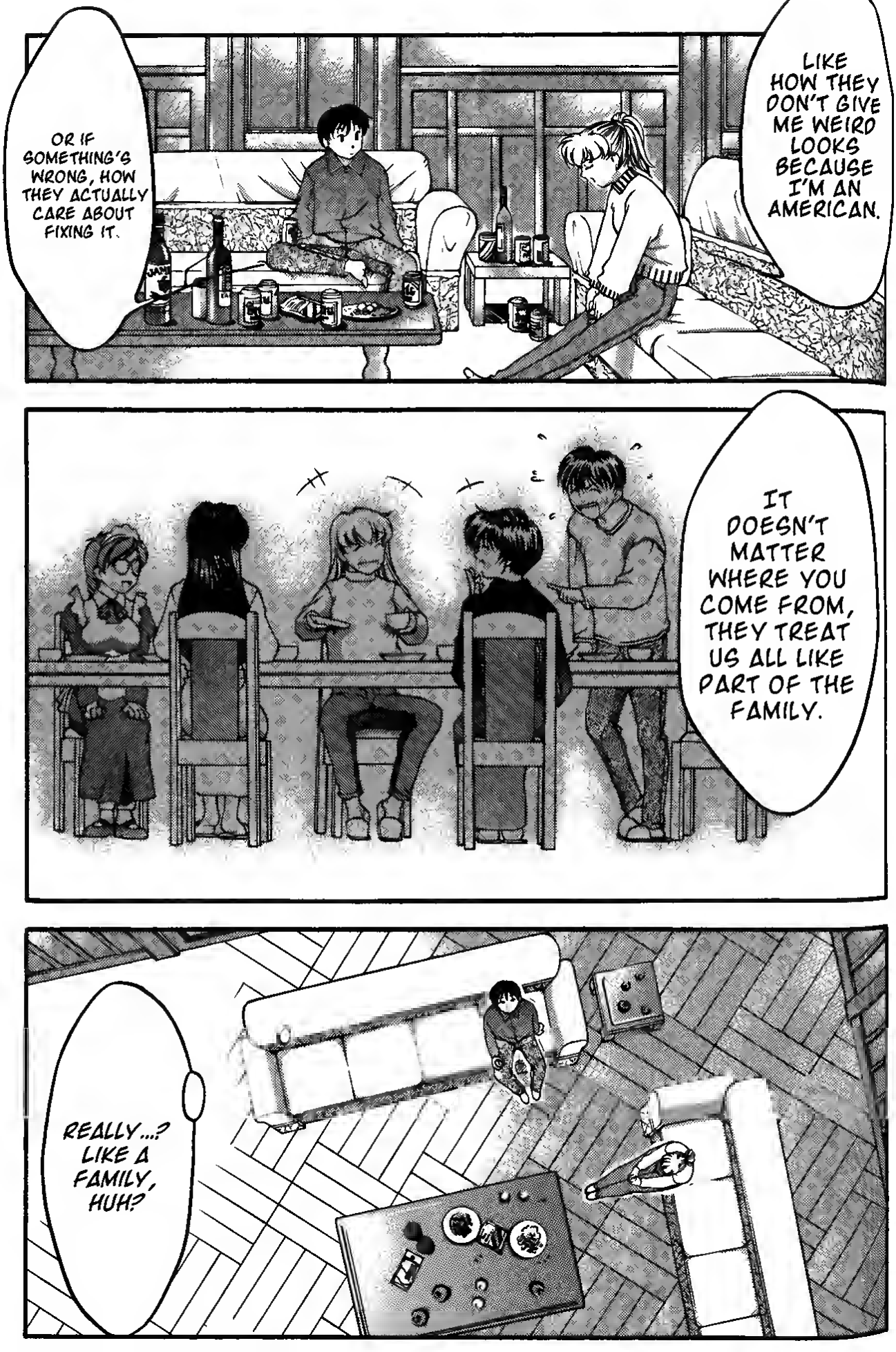
IS SOMETHING AMUSING TO YOU?!
HUH?!
Hee hee...
!?
R-!
NO... NOT AT ALL...
heh heh
?!
TINA, YOU'RE AMAZING!
HAHAHA
おはおは
エヘヘヘ
Eh heh heh
COME ON! WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
SHEESH!



はははっ
HAHAHA
...AND I WAS TOTALLY SHOCKED. I COULDN'T EVEN MOVE!!
YOU'RE LYING!
HAHAHA
はははっ
PRETZ
HAHA HA
.....

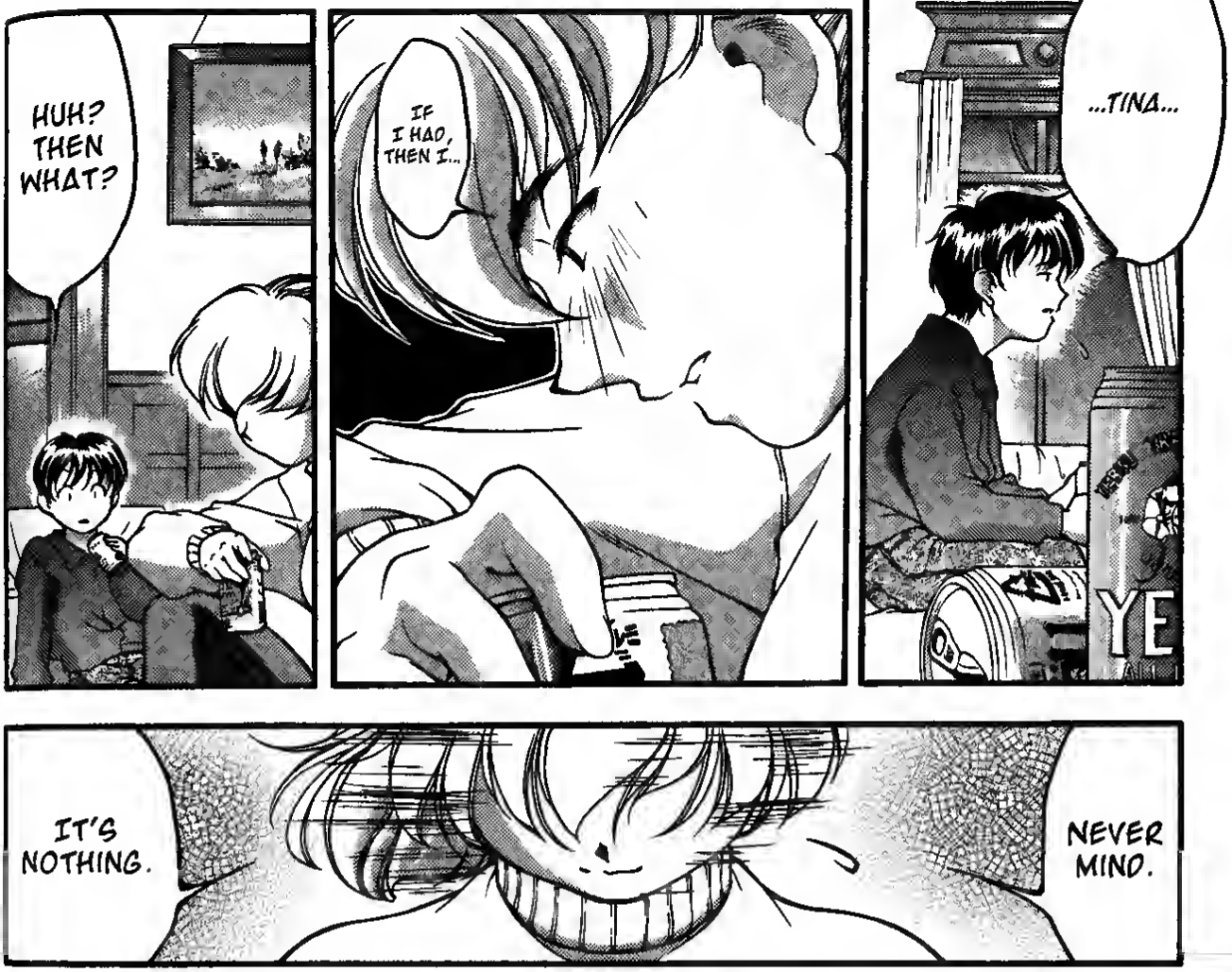
WELL ...
HUH? HOW SO?
YOU'VE CHANGED, KAORU.
...HOW CAN I PUT THIS?
Hi there!
WHEN I FIRST MET YOU ...
...LIKE YOU WOULDN'T LET ANYONE SEE INTO YOUR HEART.
YOU SEEMED SO LONELY...
SHUT UP! I WASN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL... WAS I?!
THAT'S WHY I INVITED YOU INTO THE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB.

I NOTICED A DIFFERENCE WHEN I GOT BACK FROM THE U.S., BUT I ONLY BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THE CHANGE WHEN I MOVED IN HERE.
YOU WERE ...
I SHOULD KNOW. I'VE ALWAYS KEPT AN EYE ON YOU, KAORU.
IT'S VERY CALMING.
IT'S THE SURROUNDINGS, AND THE FACT THAT YOU'RE WITH GOOD PEOPLE...


OR IF SOMETHING'S WRONG, HOW THEY ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT FIXING IT.
LIKE HOW THEY DON'T GIVE ME WEIRD LOOKS BECAUSE I'M AN AMERICAN.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU COME FROM, THEY TREAT US ALL LIKE PART OF THE FAMILY.
REALLY...? LIKE A FAMILY, HUH?

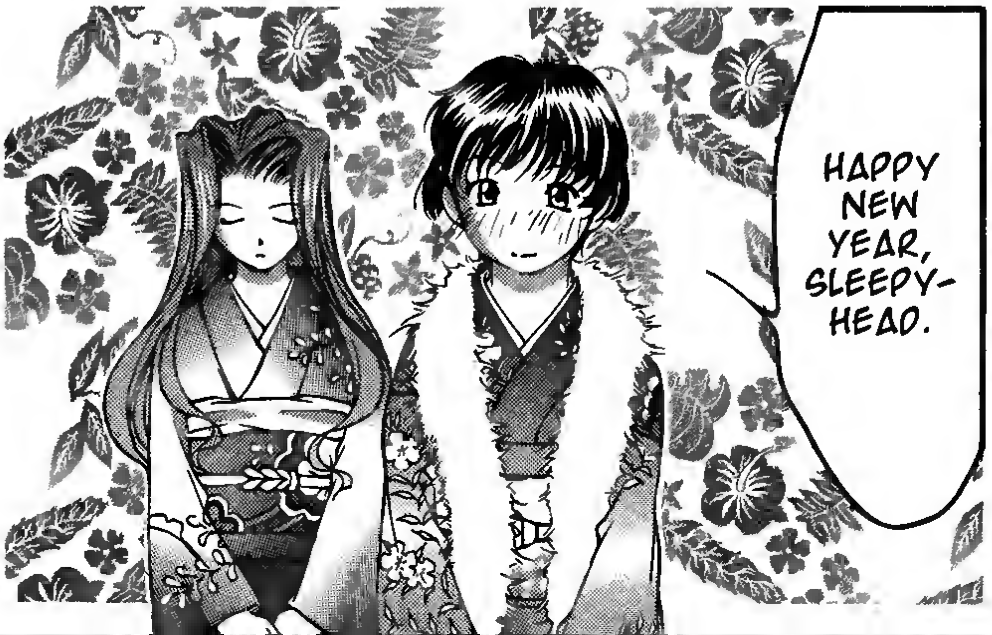
IT'S OUR LANDLADY... I'VE NEVER MET ANYONE LIKE HER
SHE'S NATURALLY GOOD-NATURED...
...AND SHE REALLY KNOWS HOW TO TAKE CARE OF ALL OF US.
SHE'S THE EPITOME OF YAMATO NADESICO... THE MODEL OF A JAPANESE WOMAN.
I WISH I COULD BE LIKE THAT, BUT I WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO START!

YOU KNOW...
...I WISH I HAD BEEN BORN JAPANESE, SO I COULD BE LIKE HER.


HUH? THEN WHAT?
IF I HAD, THEN I...
...TINA...
IT'S NOTHING.
NEVER MIND.

DRINK UP, YOU WUSS!

• ALL RIGHT, LETS GET SMASHED!



GEH...!
KAORU-DONO!!
HEY! WHERE'S TINA...?
A plane ticket came though, so I went home.
Please-clean up!!
WHA--? OH! HAPPY NEW YEAR!
I'm so happy to see you!
くちゃ
...BUT I DIDN'T SAY YOU COULD DESTROY IT!!
I TOLD YOU THAT YOU COULD FEEL FREE TO STAY IN THE MANSION...
AWWWWWW... no fair!
START CLEANING, BUCKO! I WANT THIS PLACE BACK THE WAY YOU FOUND IT!

End of Chapter 23: Sanchou—First Three Days of the New Year

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI

第二十四話　蛍雪―けいせつ―

CHAPTER 24 KEISETSU DILIGENT STUDY

I-I'M SORRY!
MINAZUKI-SAN!!
I'VE NEVER SEEN SOMEONE BREAK SO MUCH DISHWARE! I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE ARE ANY PLATES LEFT IN JAPAN!
ガッチャーン
ガミガミ
YOU'VE BEEN WORSE THAN EVER THESE PAST FEW DAYS. YOU NEED TO GET IT TOGETHER, AND DO IT QUICK!
TAEKO-SAN, PLEASE GO DO THE LAUNDRY.
DON'T WORRY, MIYABI-SAN. I'LL CLEAN THIS UP.
……
ヨレ
YES MISS...I REALLY AM SORRY.

TAEKO-SAN MEANS WELL. SHE JUST SEEMS REALLY TIRED LATELY.
sigh
NOT MUCH. JUST MINAZUKI-SAN'S 800TH SCREW-UP.
IT'S PROBABLY BECAUSE WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF MID-TERMS.
DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?
GOOD MORNING, AOI-CHAN, MIYABI-SAN.
Ah! Good morning.
.....
REALLY ...?
IN FACT, NOW THAT YOU MEN-TION IT, I'VE NOTICED SHE'S BEEN STUDYING PRETTY LATE...
.....
CRY ME A RIVER! WORK IS WORK, SCHOOL IS SCHOOL. IF SHE CAN'T BALANCE BOTH, THEN SHE NEEDS TO GIVE ONE UP.

YOU'VE GOT A PHILOSOPHY TEST TOMORROW, RIGHT?
TAEKO-CHAN!!
I'VE GOT MY OLD EXAM. IT SHOULD BE PRETTY HELPFUL. THE QUESTIONS DON'T USUALLY CHANGE MUCH.
OH ...!
THANK YOU SO MUCH !!
I CAN'T PASS THIS LEVEL ON MY GAME...
.....
ピコ
ピコ
HUH?!
KAORUUUU, HELP! IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!

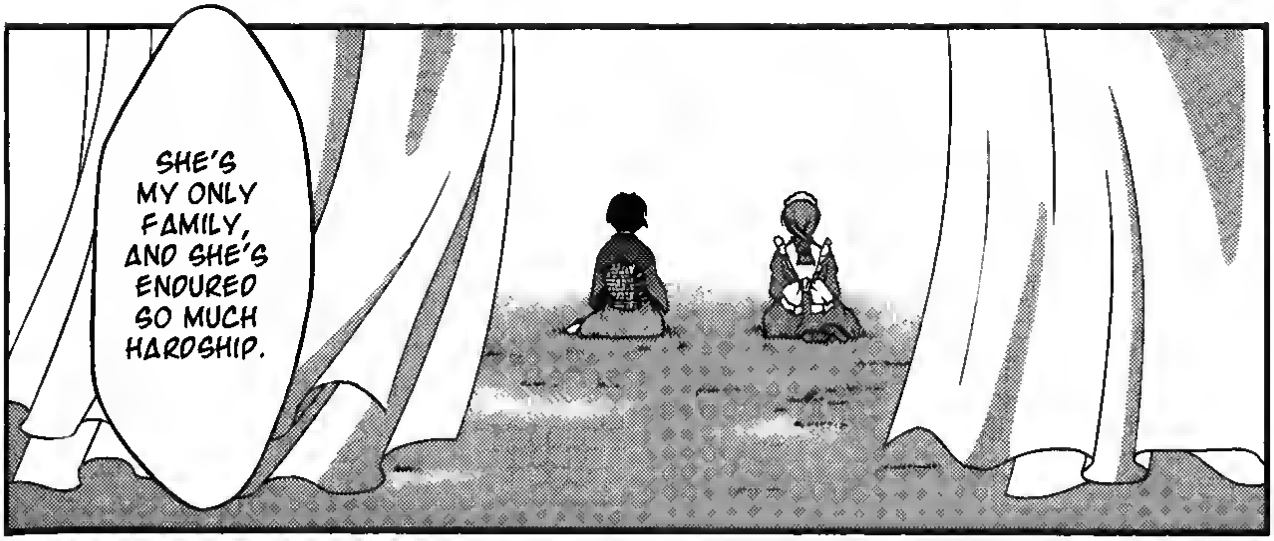
LUCKY!!
Evil wench
Straight-A city!
NOT LIKELY! I'M ONLY TAKING EASY CLASSES!!
TINA-SENPAI, DON'T YOU NEED TO STUDY FOR YOUR EXAMS?!
YOU'VE GOT A LOT ON YOUR PLATE, BUT YOU CAN DO IT!
DON'T WORRY, TAEKO-SAN. IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE WITH, WE CAN HELP.
OKAY!!

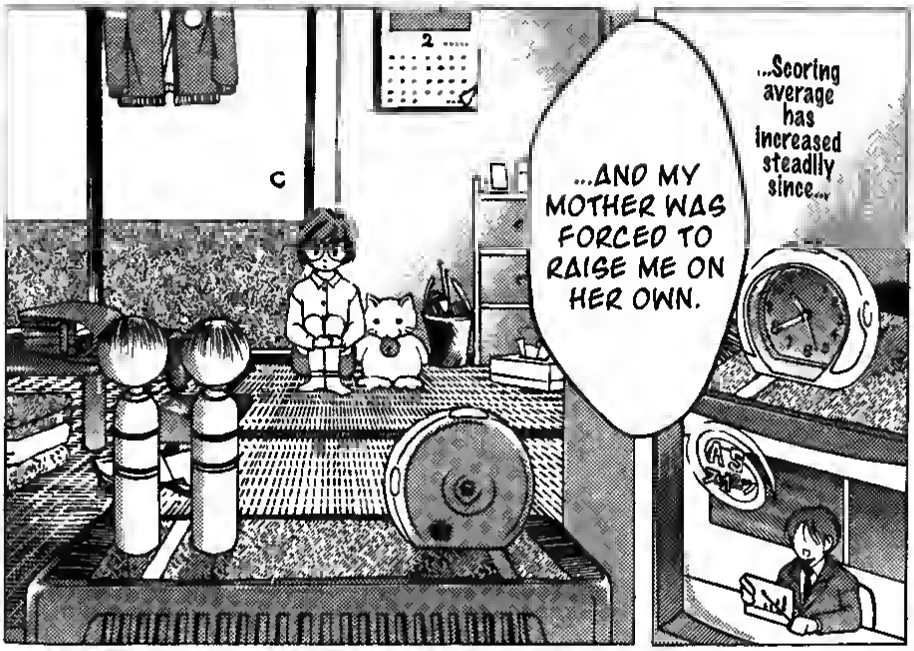
HAHAHA
おほほ
'KAY,
AND HERE ...
I- I'M SO SORRY!

TAE-CHIIIN! MAKE ROOM FOR ONE MORE!!
yay!~
EEEEEEK!!
TAE-CHIN, TAE-CHIN!!
LAND-LADY-SAAAAN!

I ONLY GOT TWO HOURS OF SLEEP... I CAN'T KEEP THIS UP...
No! Miyabi-san is going to kill me...
HYAAAAH!!
TAEKO-SAN!!
OH, NO! I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE YOU!
NO, IT'S MY FAULT. I WAS TOTALLY ZONING OUT...

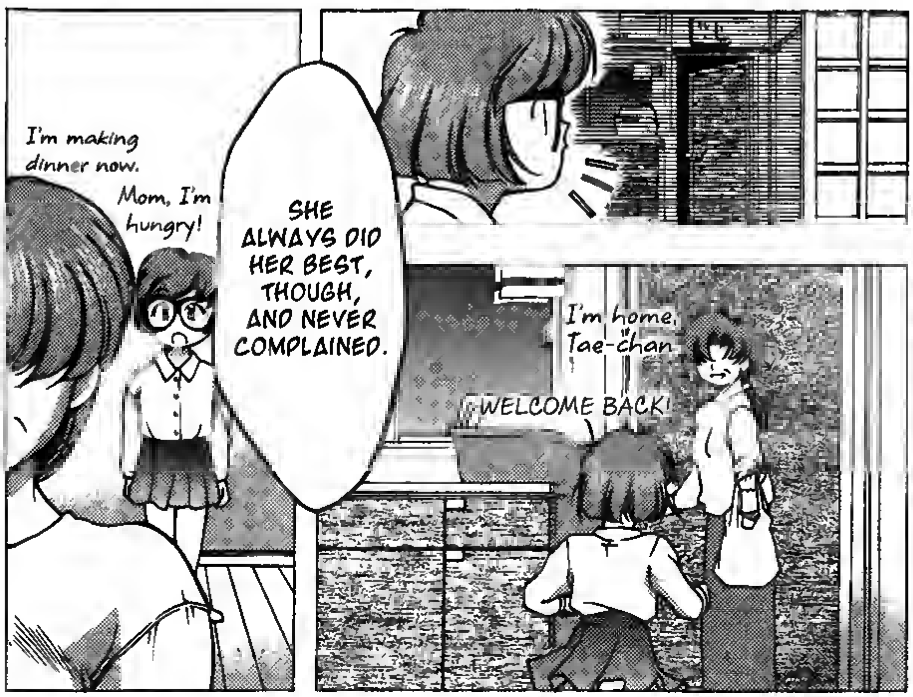
ME?! I'M GREAT! PEACHY! SEE?!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?! ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH REST?
TAEKO-SAN, NO ONE WILL HOLD IT AGAINST YOU IF YOU TAKE A HIATUS FROM WORK TO PREPARE FOR SCHOOL...
THAT'S VERY GOOD OF YOU...
...BUT IF I WERE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SOME-THING THAT TRIVIAL, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FACE MY MOTHER.


SHE'S MY ONLY FAMILY, AND SHE'S ENDURED SO MUCH HARDSHIP.


...AND MY MOTHER WAS FORCED TO RAISE ME ON HER OWN.

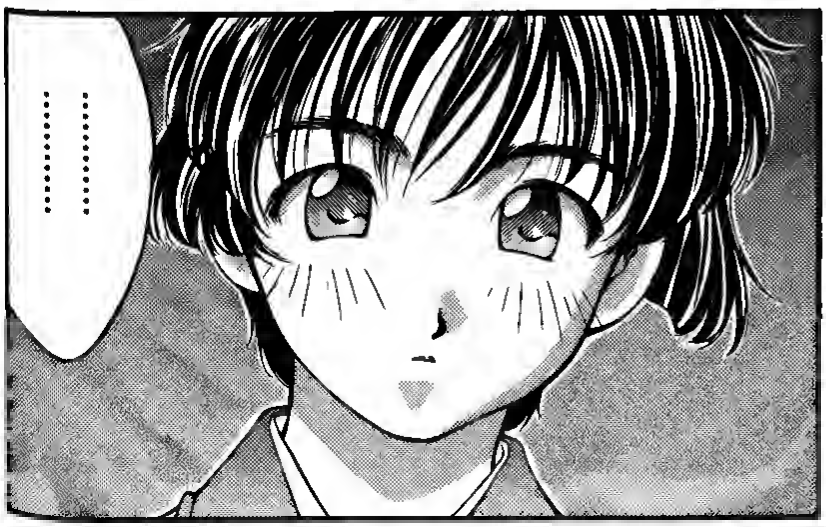
...Scoring average has increased steadily since...

MY FATHER DIED WHEN I WAS SMALL...


I'm making dinner now.
Mom, I'm hungry!
SHE ALWAYS DID HER BEST, THOUGH, AND NEVER COMPLAINED.
I'm home, Tae-chan.
WELCOME BACK!

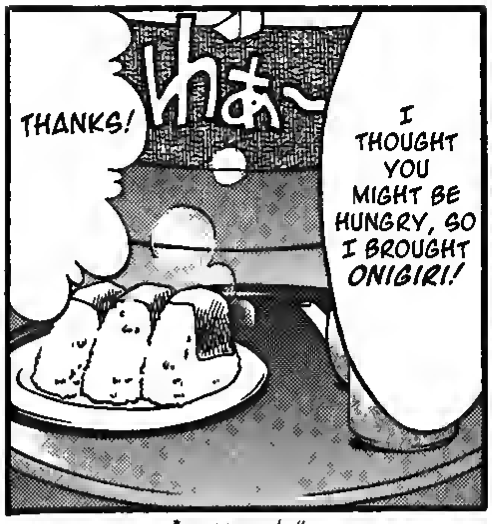
SHE BROKE HER BACK FOR ME, NEVER ONCE THINKING OF HERSELF.
SHE'S MY HERO, AND IF I GAVE UP ON MY DUTIES, I'D FEEL LIKE I WAS LETTING HER DOWN...
TO BE LIKE HER...
...I HAVE TO WORK HARD TOO!!
OH, TAEKO-SAN...
AH! DON'T GIVE IT ANOTHER THOUGHT!

BESIDES, AS CLUMSY AS I AM, IF I DON'T TRY EXTRA HARD, I'LL END UP BEING PRETTY USELESS!

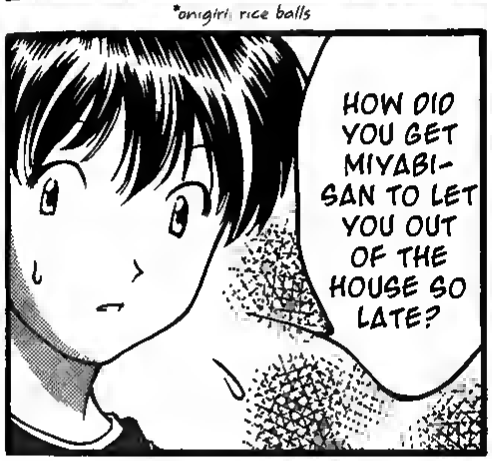

.....

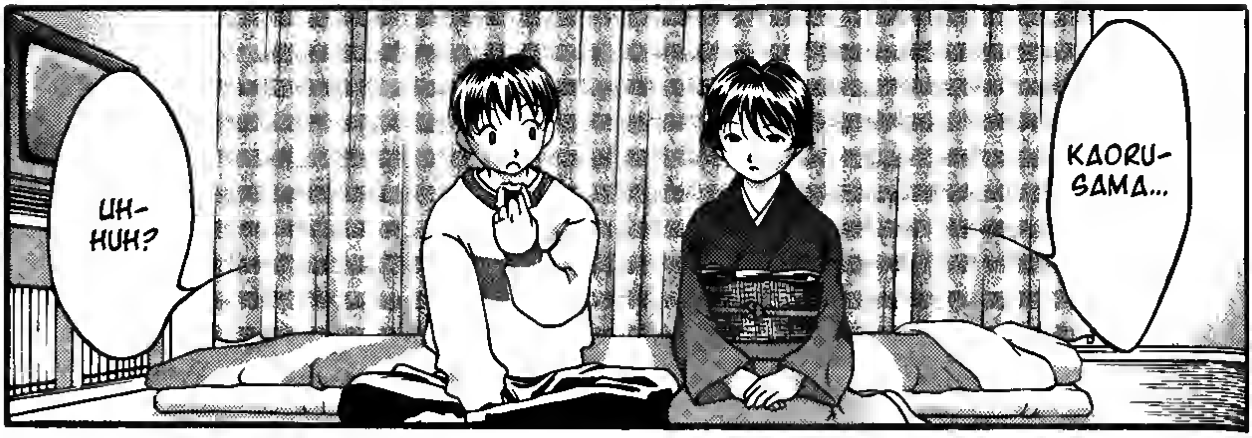
MY MOTHER ...
...HAD FAITH IN ME, THOUGH.

YOU CAN PROBABLY EXPECT THIS ON THE LAST TEST.
THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW.
I THINK YOU'LL DO FINE.
THANKS. GOOD NIGHT.
おーーーし
JEEZ, IT'S LATE! I NEED TO GET CRACKING ON MY OWN STUDYING!
コンコン
COME IN...
WHAT IS IT, TAEKO-CHA...
MONE

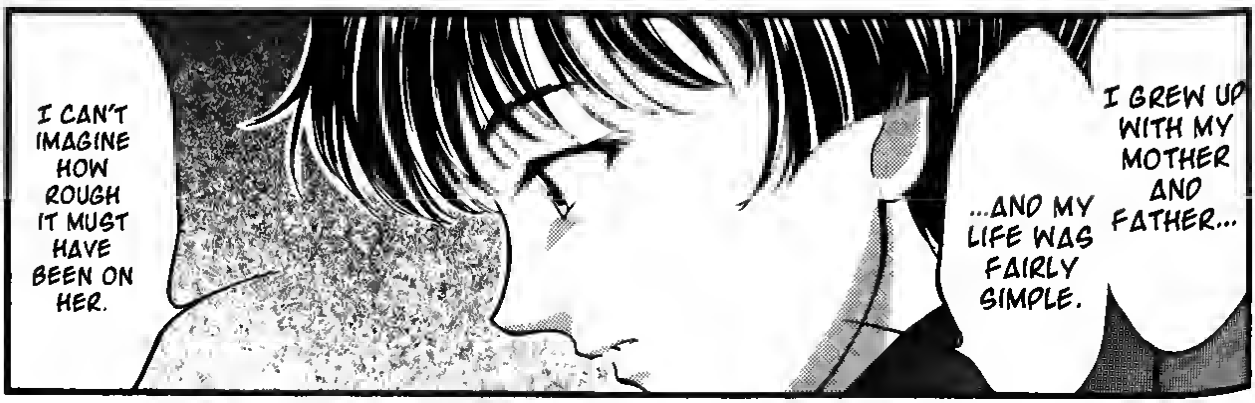


*onigiri: rice balls



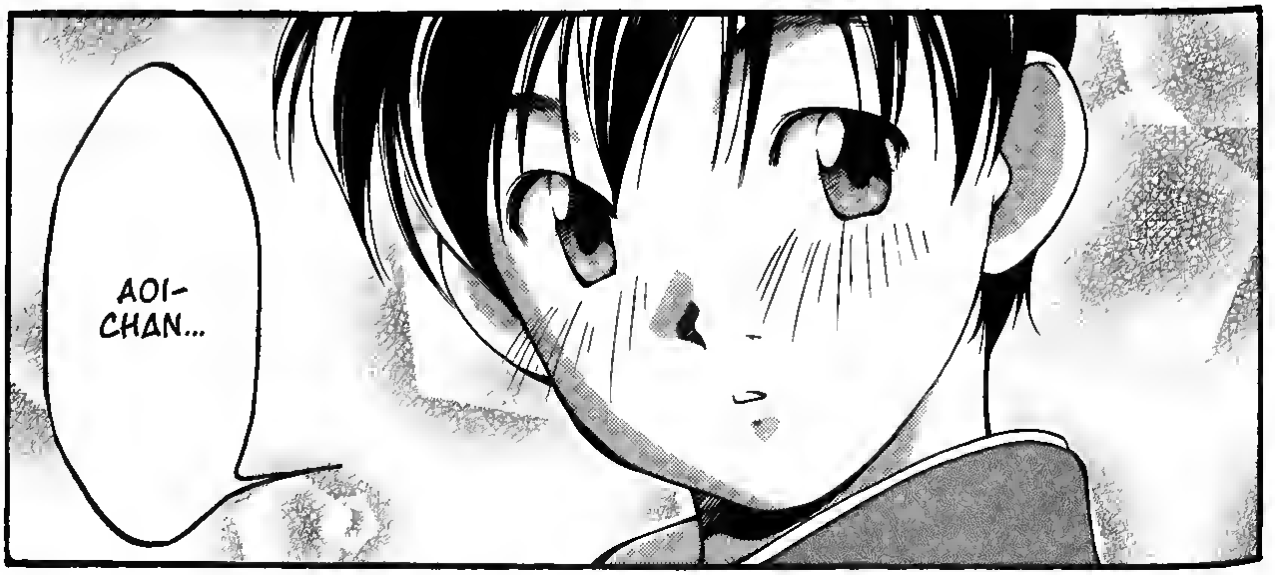

KAORU-SAMA...
UH-HUH?

TAEKO-SAN IS AN AMAZING PERSON, ISN'T SHE...


I GREW UP WITH MY MOTHER AND FATHER...
...AND MY LIFE WAS FAIRLY SIMPLE.
I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW ROUGH IT MUST HAVE BEEN ON HER.

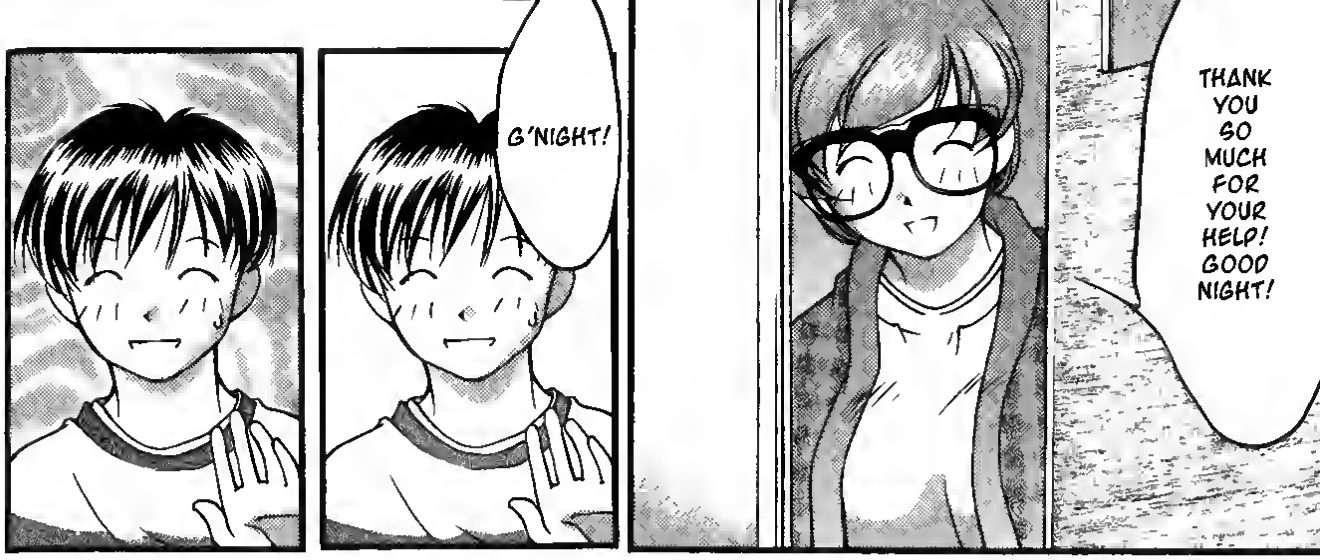
.....
IT MAKES MY HEART BREAK JUST TO THINK ABOUT IT...
BUT, BEING NEXT TO YOU, KAORU-SAMA,
...AND MAKING YOU ONIGIRI...
...LIKE TONIGHT...
...BEING ABLE TO TOUCH YOU LIKE THIS TAKES MY WORRIES AWAY..

KAORU-SAMA...
CAN YOU FORGIVE ME FOR BEING SO SELFISH?!


AOI-CHAN...

SENPAAAAI! MAY I COME IN?!
I HAVE A QUESTION ...
OH NO! WHAT SHOULD I DO?! WHAT SHOULD I DO!?!
Ahwawawa!
あわわわわっ
OH, NO! YOU WERE ABOUT TO GO TO SLEEP, WEREN'T YOU?
HOW RUDE OF ME!
It's fine, don't worry. WHAT'S UP?!
I'M SORRY, BUT SOMETHING ELSE OCCURRED TO ME...

UM... IT'S THIS THING HERE...
OH, THAT.
PHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE...
TRY IT LIKE THIS ...
AAHH, I GET IT.
.....
.....
KAORU-SAMA... YOU'RE SO WARM.
すり
すり
THEN HERE...
GOTCHA!



す～
EH...?
AOI-CHAN, I'M SORRY! ARE YOU OKAY?!
なで
なで
SLEEP WELL, AOI-CHAN!!
HEH. SHE'S SO WORRIED ABOUT TAEKO-CHAN, SHE CAN'T SEE HOW HARD SHE'S BEEN WORKING HERSELF...

End of Chapter 24: Keisetsu—Diligent Study

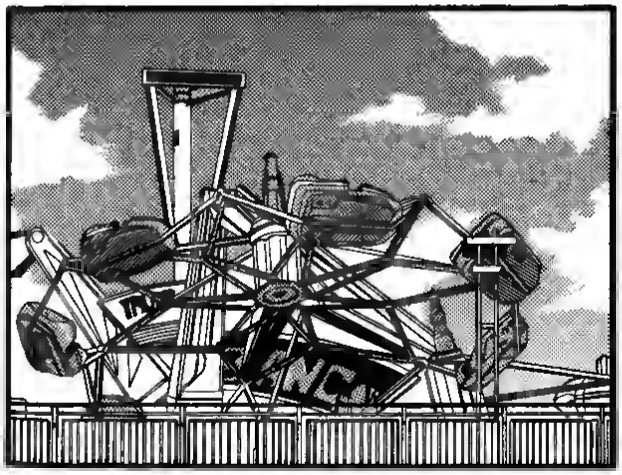
藍より青し

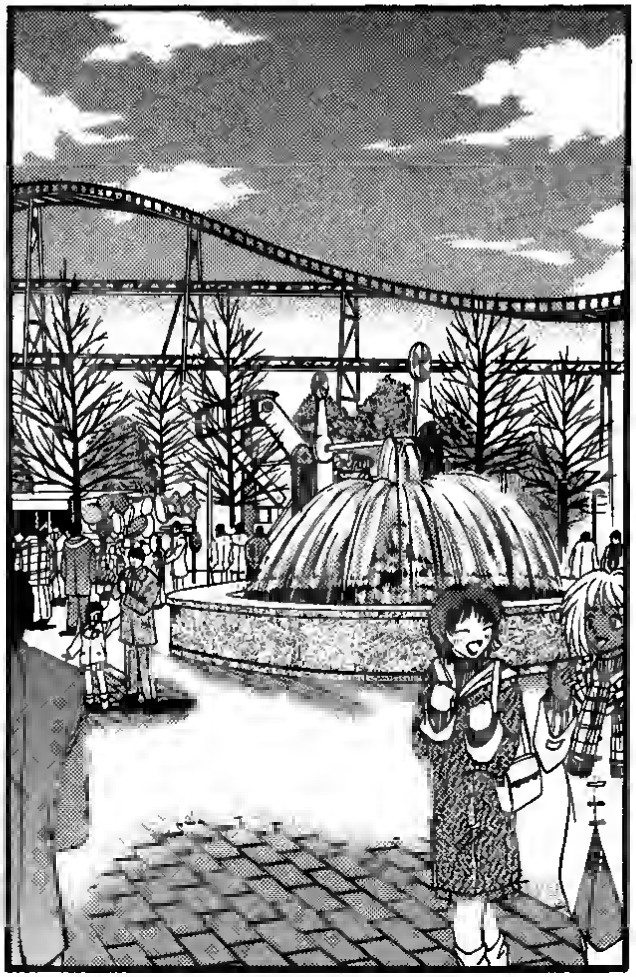
AI YORI AOSHI

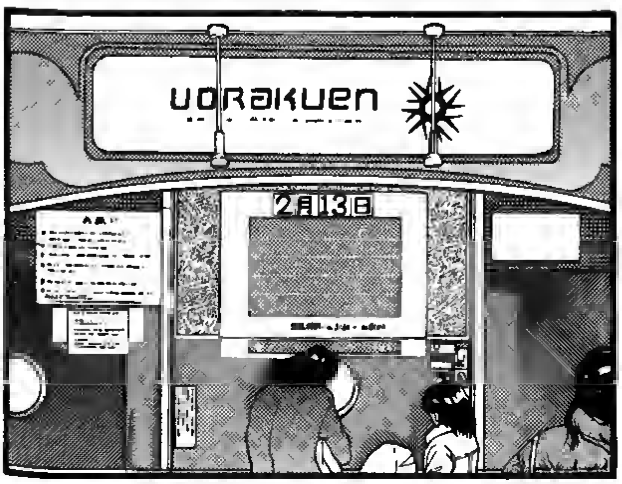
第二十五話　小春―こはる―

CHAPTER 24 KOHARU WARM DAYS

UORAKUEN

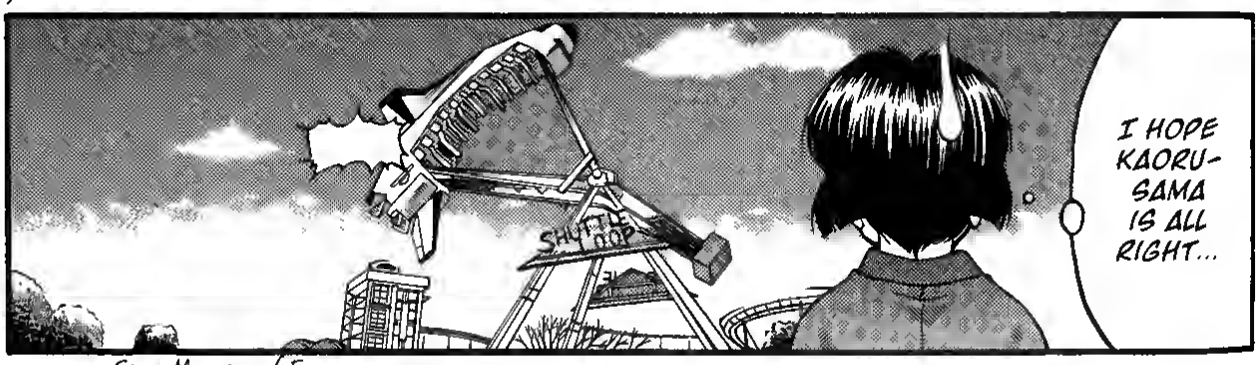




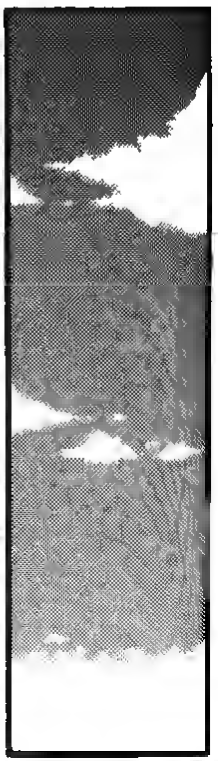

uorakuen
2F 3F

WOW, IT'S FANTASTIC!!
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE BEEN TO AN AMUSEMENT PARK.
EXAMS ARE OVER! IT'S TIME FOR SOME FUN!
I HOPE I PASSED...
TOO BAD MIYABI-SAN WOULDN'T COME...
POOR THING.
I HAVE WORK TO DO.
PLEASE BE BACK BY CURFEW.
LET'S SKIP RIGHT OVER THE WIMPY RIDES AND GO FOR THE SHUTTLE LOOP!!
IT'S THE SCARIEST RIDE IN THE ENTIRE PLACE!
AND SO YOU WANT US ALL TO DIE WITH YOU?

SHUTTLE LOOP
HEH-HEH. I'LL WAIT OUT HERE, THANKS!
ARE YOU NUTS? LET'S DITCH THIS KILLJOY!
some sick joke
WOO-HOO!



Sign: Mansion of Fear



NOOO!
COME ON, COME ON!
QUIT KIDDING AROUND! IT'LL BE FUN!!
NO THANKS! I'LL PASS!
WELL... HOW SCARY CAN IT BE?
HA HA HA HA!
THIS IS THE BEST!!

I'M SCARED !! KAORUUU !!
KAORU-SAMAAAAA! KYAAAAAAHH !!
How adorable!
LOOK, LOOK, THIS IS REALLY WELL-MADE!
EEEEEEK !!
AAAAHHHH!!
COOL!! ♡
Somebody please kill me...
ひぇ
WASN'T THAT FUN?

KAORU, LET'S GO ON THAT!!
GOOD LUCK!
I hope he's okay...
THIS ONE! THIS ONE!
AND THAT!!
AND THIS!
How are you?
LET'S SEE, LET'S SEE, WHAT'S NEXT...

TINA-SENPAI, LOOK, LOOK!!
HN ?!
You've got no stamina!
WHAT IS IT, KAORU? YOU'RE POOPED ALREADY?!
TINA... SORRY. LET ME REST A MINUTE...
DON'T MIND ME. GO ON AHEAD...
WHAAA?! YOU'RE NOT COMING?
YOU'RE RIGHT!!
THAT'S THE MEGA DROP! IT'S LEGENDARY !!
OKAY. WE'LL MEET BACK HERE AT THREE O'CLOCK.
Okay, enjoy yourselves!
WE'LL STAY AND CHEER YOU ON FROM HERE. GO HAVE FUN!

UH, OKAY...
OH, I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING... WAIT HERE A MINUTE!
HERE!! KAORU-SAMA
THANKS!
MM... IT'S SO COLD AND YUMMY.
I'M SORRY. WE CAME HERE TO HAVE FUN AND I'M ALREADY EXHAUSTED...

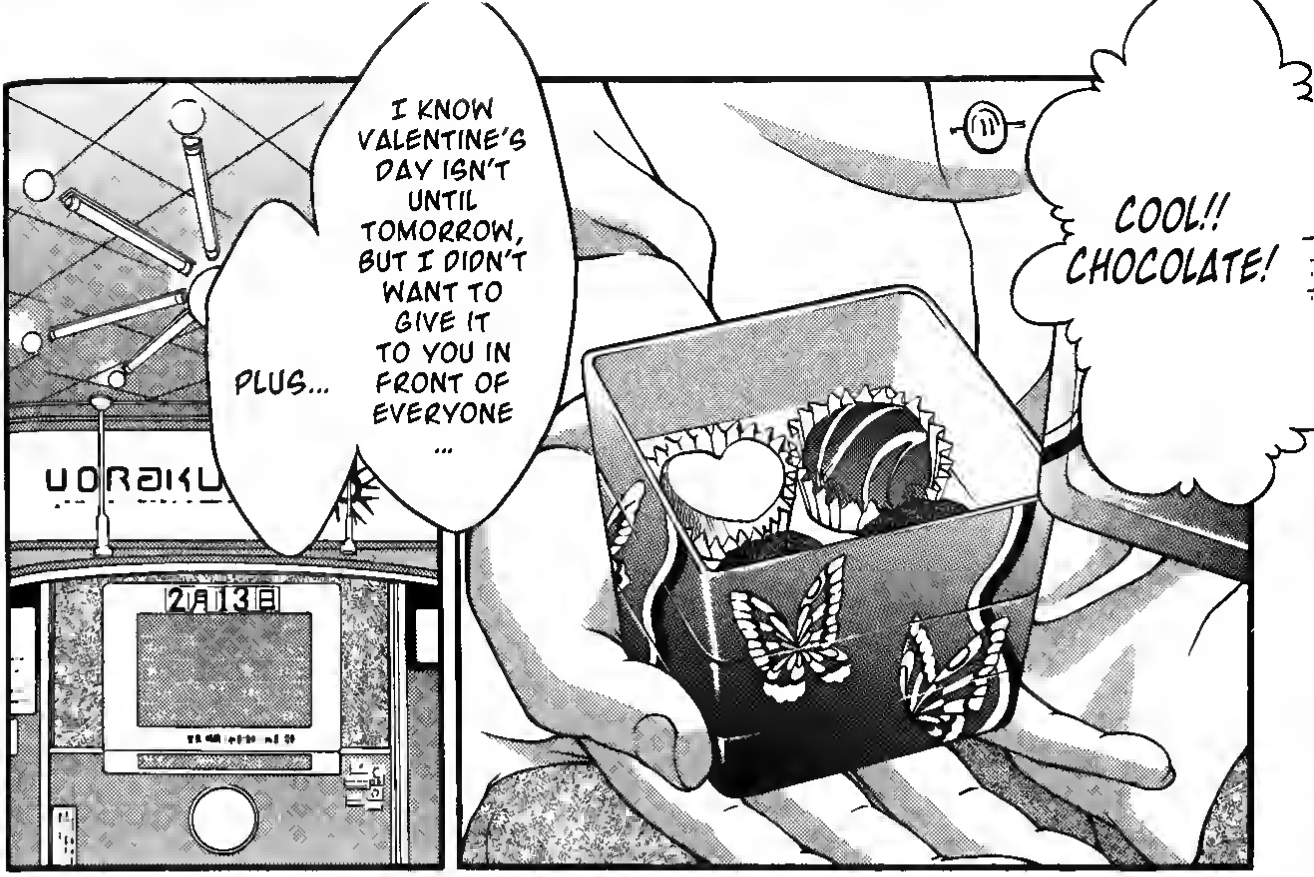
YOU DON'T THINK IT'S FUN SITTING HERE TOGETHER? BECAUSE I DO!
It's so cute!
KAORU-SAMA, WHAT'S THIS THING?!
IT'S A COMPATIBILITY TEST. WHEN YOU FEED IT YOUR INFORMATION, IT TELLS YOU IF YOU BELONG TOGETHER OR NOT.
It's really just a game.
Another World
WANT TO TRY IT?!
YES !!

WHAT'S WRONG, AOI-CHAN?!
おぉはぁ〜
I DON'T KNOW...I WAS JUST SUDDENLY SCARED TO LOOK!
What if we're not compatible...?
THEN LET'S LOOK AT IT TOGETHER !!
ONE, TWO...
まぢ〜
WA-WA!
I'M SO GLAD!! KAORU-SAMA!
ぜ、ぜ
HEY! WE GOT AN A. PERFECT!

AOI-CHAN, WANT TO RIDE THE FERRIS WHEEL?!
UH... UM...
O-OKAY!!
NEXT IN LINE!
UM... KAORU-SAMA, IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I SIT NEXT TO YOU?!
NOT AT ALL.
OOHH, WE'RE GOING UP, WE'RE GOING UP!

CLICK
DON'T TELL ME YOU DON'T LIKE THE FERRIS WHEEL?!
...AOI-CHAN
BIG BIG
I THOUGHT I WOULD BE OKAY BECAUSE I WAS WITH YOU...
Really?! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?
A-AOI-CHAN, LOOK!!
I'll be all right...

WAAA!!
IT'S SO PRETTY!
YUP!!
AH! THAT'S RIGHT!! THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO GIVE YOU.
HERE!
!?
SHOULD I OPEN IT HERE?
YES!!


I KNOW VALENTINE'S DAY ISN'T UNTIL TOMORROW, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE IT TO YOU IN FRONT OF EVERYONE ...
PLUS...
COOL!! CHOCOLATE!

...I WANTED MY CANDY TO BE THE FIRST THAT YOU ATE!

MM...IT'S DELI-CIOUS
モグモグ
DO YOU LIKE IT?!
THANK YOU, AOI-CHAN.
I WAS NERVOUS. I'VE NEVER MADE CHOCOLATE MYSELF BEFORE.
THANK GOODNESS...
HOLD STILL FOR A SECOND...
OKAY
EH? WHERE?!
TEE-HEE! THERE'S CHOCOLATE ON YOUR FACE..

AH.....
.....
ドン
ドン
I-I'm sorry! What was I... I was so happy, I...
ドン
ドン
ドン
ドン
ハハ
クス
ゼクッ
OKAY, KIDS, LAST STOP!

HURRY IT UP, YOU TWO! YOU'RE LATE!!
ALL RIGHT! LOOKS LIKE OUR BOY GOT HIS SECOND WIND!
SORRY...
NOT A CHANCE!!
I THINK THIS CALLS FOR A SECOND GO 'ROUND ON THE SHUTTLE LOOP!!

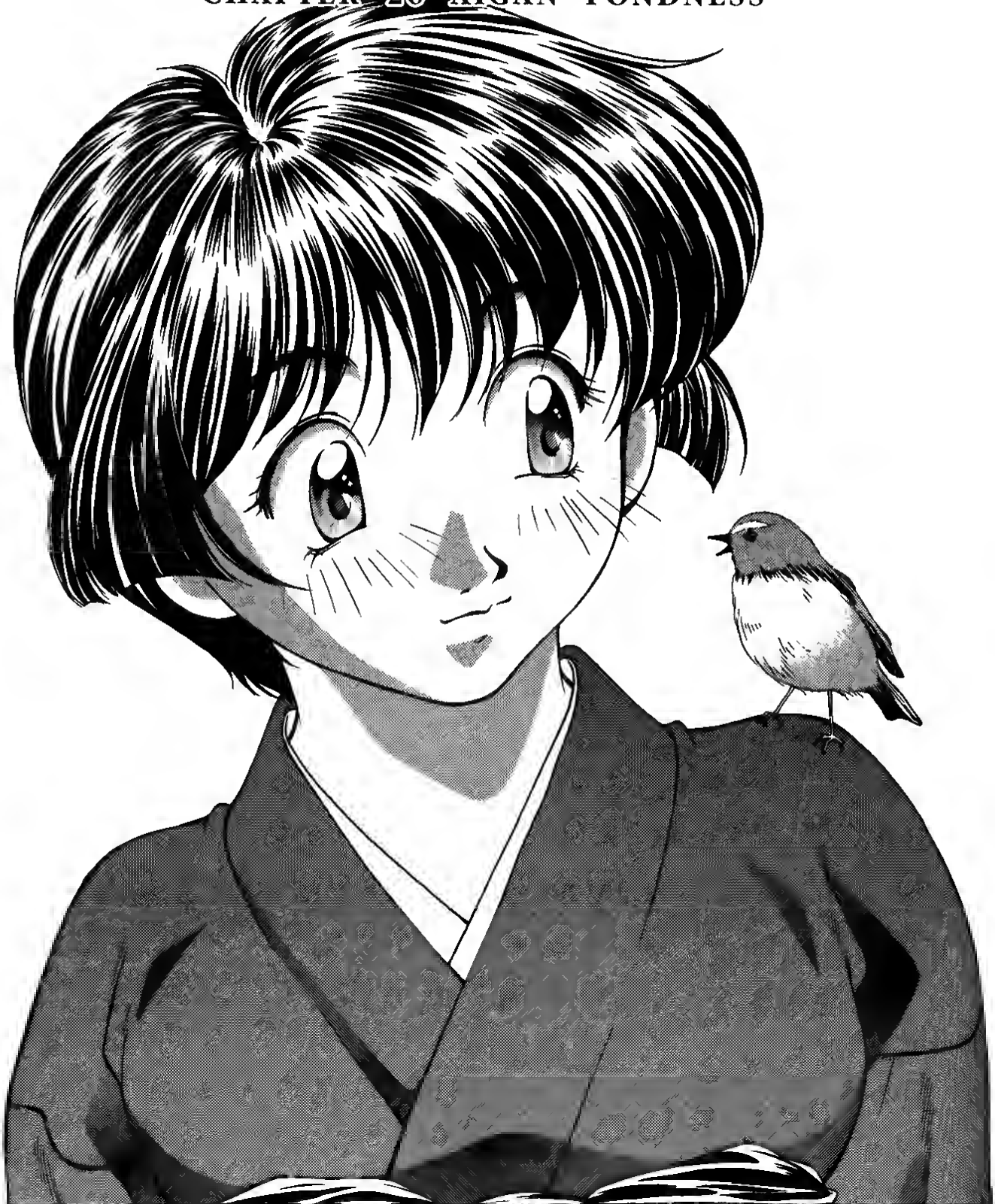
End of Chapter 25: Koharu—Warm Days

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI

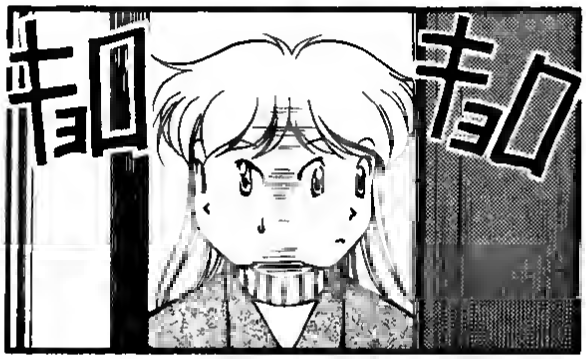
第二十六話　愛玩―あいがん―

CHAPTER 26 AIGAN FONDNESS

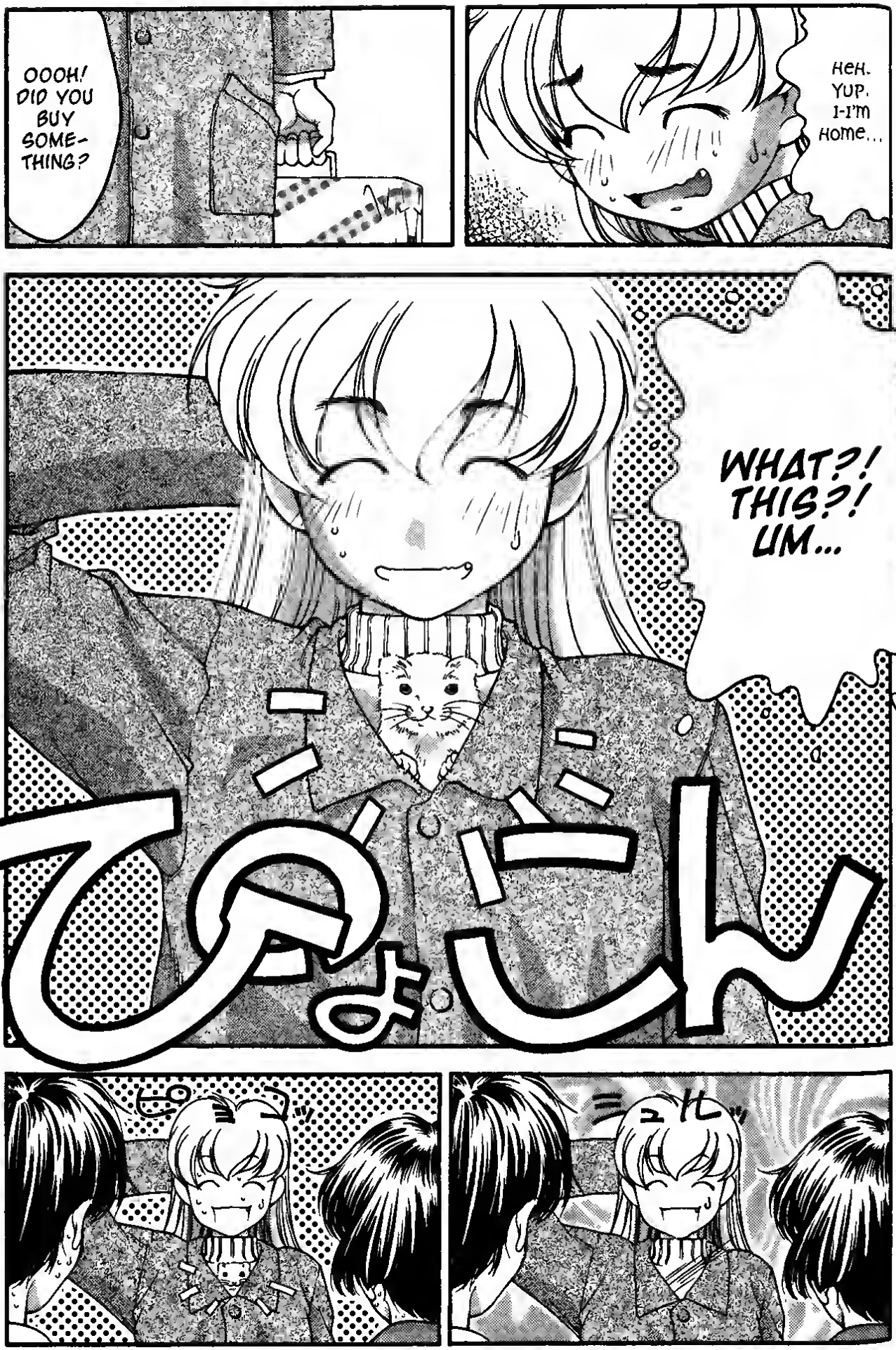


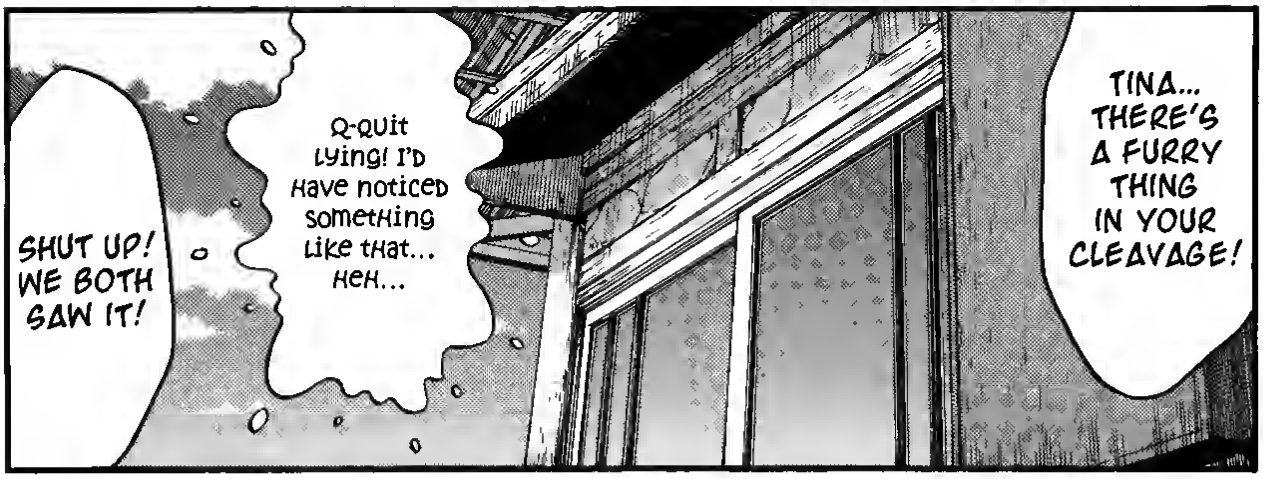
カラカラ…

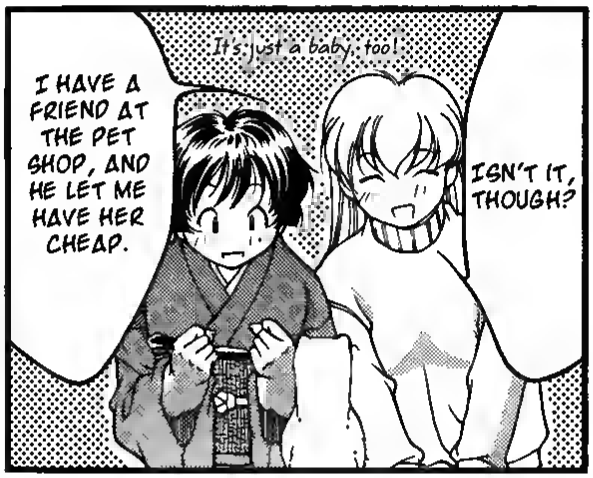
そろり
そろり

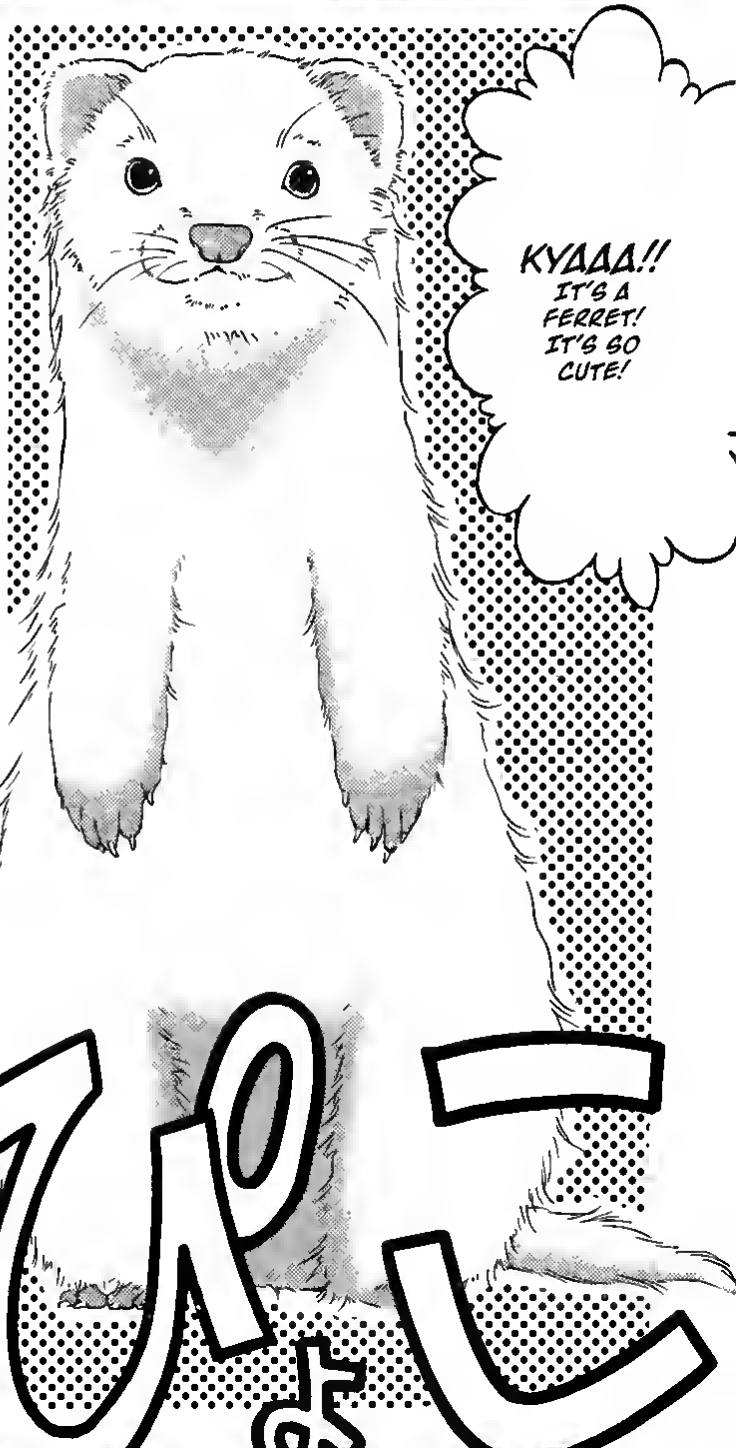

キョロ
キョロ

You're home!
HEY, TINA!! WELCOME BACK.


OOOH! DID YOU BUY SOME-THING?
HEH. YUP. I-I'M HOME...
WHAT?! THIS?! UM...
てのひら
ミュル


TINA... THERE'S A FURRY THING IN YOUR CLEAVAGE!
Q-QUIT LYING! I'D HAVE NOTICED SOMETHING LIKE THAT... HEH...
SHUT UP! WE BOTH SAW IT!


It's just a baby, too!
I HAVE A FRIEND AT THE PET SHOP, AND HE LET ME HAVE HER CHEAP.
ISN'T IT, THOUGH?


KYAAA!! IT'S A FERRET! IT'S SO CUTE!
フェレ

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP IT?

WELL... I WAS GOING TO ASK LANDLADY-SAN ABOUT THAT~~
すり～♡

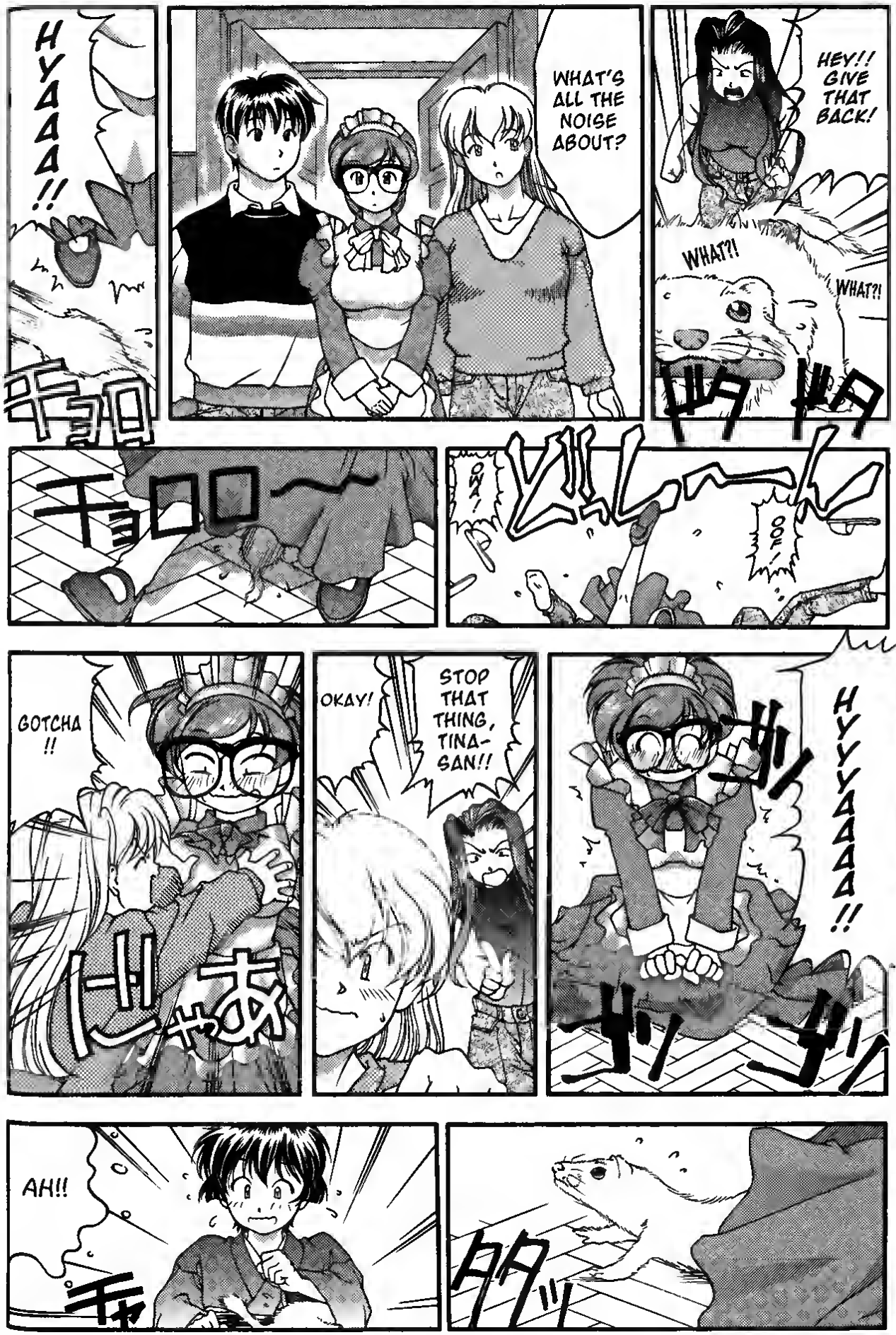
LOOK! ISN'T SHE SWEET? IT'S SO PLAYFUL!
I can keep her, right?
HEE HEE HEE! HOW PRECIOUS!
ANIMALS MAKE GIRLS ACT WEIRD!
SHE W-WON'T MIND!
HOW COULD SHE NOT SEE IT'S THE CUTEST THING EVER?
UMMM... WHAT ABOUT MIYABI-SAN?
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!

IT HAS TO GO!
IT STINKS ALREADY
Animals breed disease!
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT KEEPING IT.
IS ALL THIS RUCKUS JUST FOR THIS FILTHY VERMIN?
RETURN THE BEAST THIS INSTANT!!
AAAAUHH! THAT TICKLES, YOU PEST!!
MIYABI-SAN...ISN'T THERE SOME WAY SHE CAN KEEP HER PET?!

UH...
IF WE START HAVING PETS, IT'S ONLY GOING TO CREATE MORE WORK FOR MINAZUKI-SAN!
What a sweetheart!
SUCH A CUTIE WON'T BE ANY TROUBLE...
FINE! DO WHAT YOU WANT! YOU JUST CAN'T HAVE IT IN THE MAIN HOUSE!

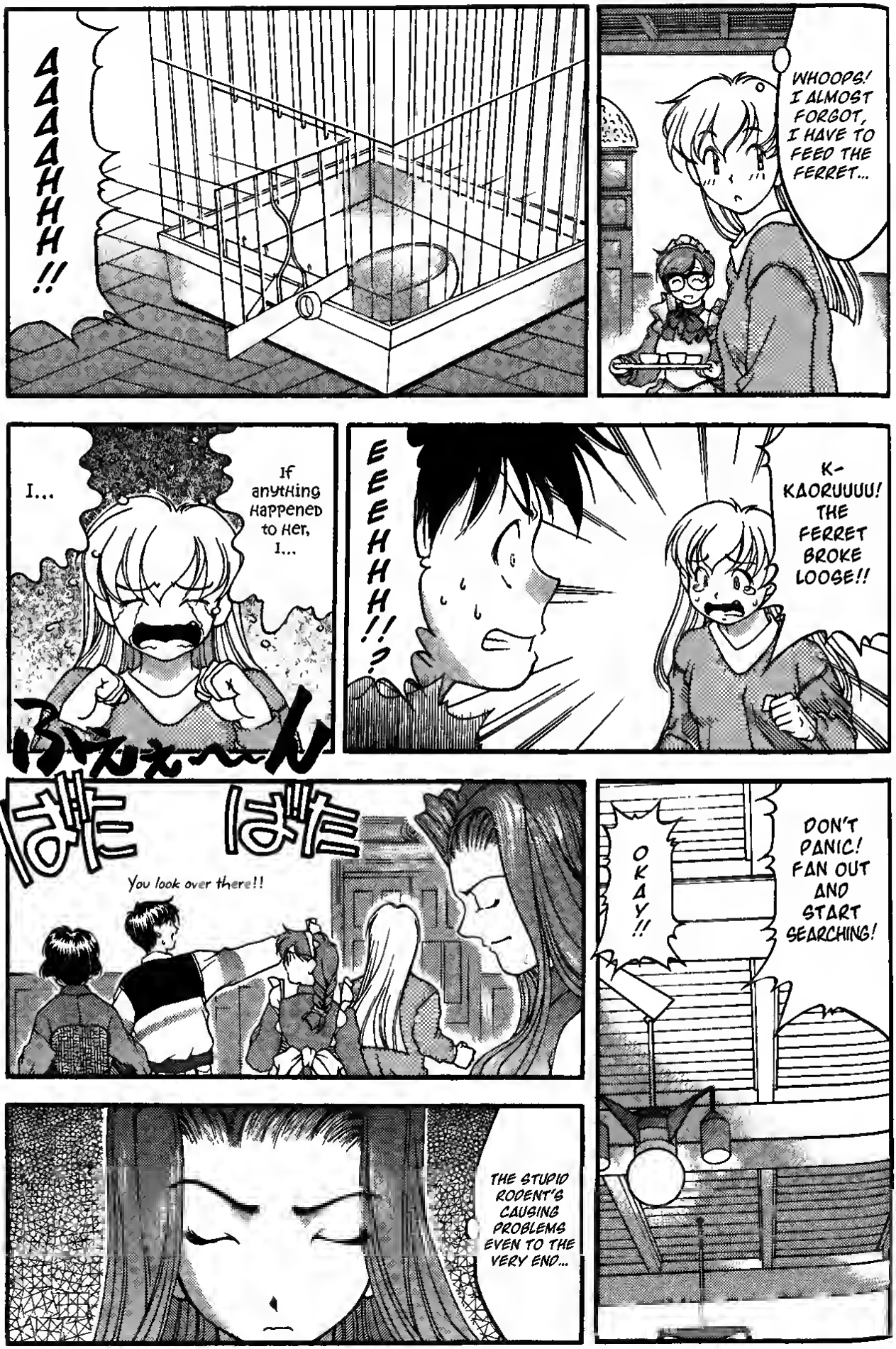
ペロ
ペロ
OH! HOW SWEET! SHE'S DRINKING!
AOI-CHAN SURE WOULD MAKE A GREAT MOTHER.
You're such a good girl.
YES!!
IT'S A HEALTHY LITTLE THING...
ぎゅ
ぎゅ

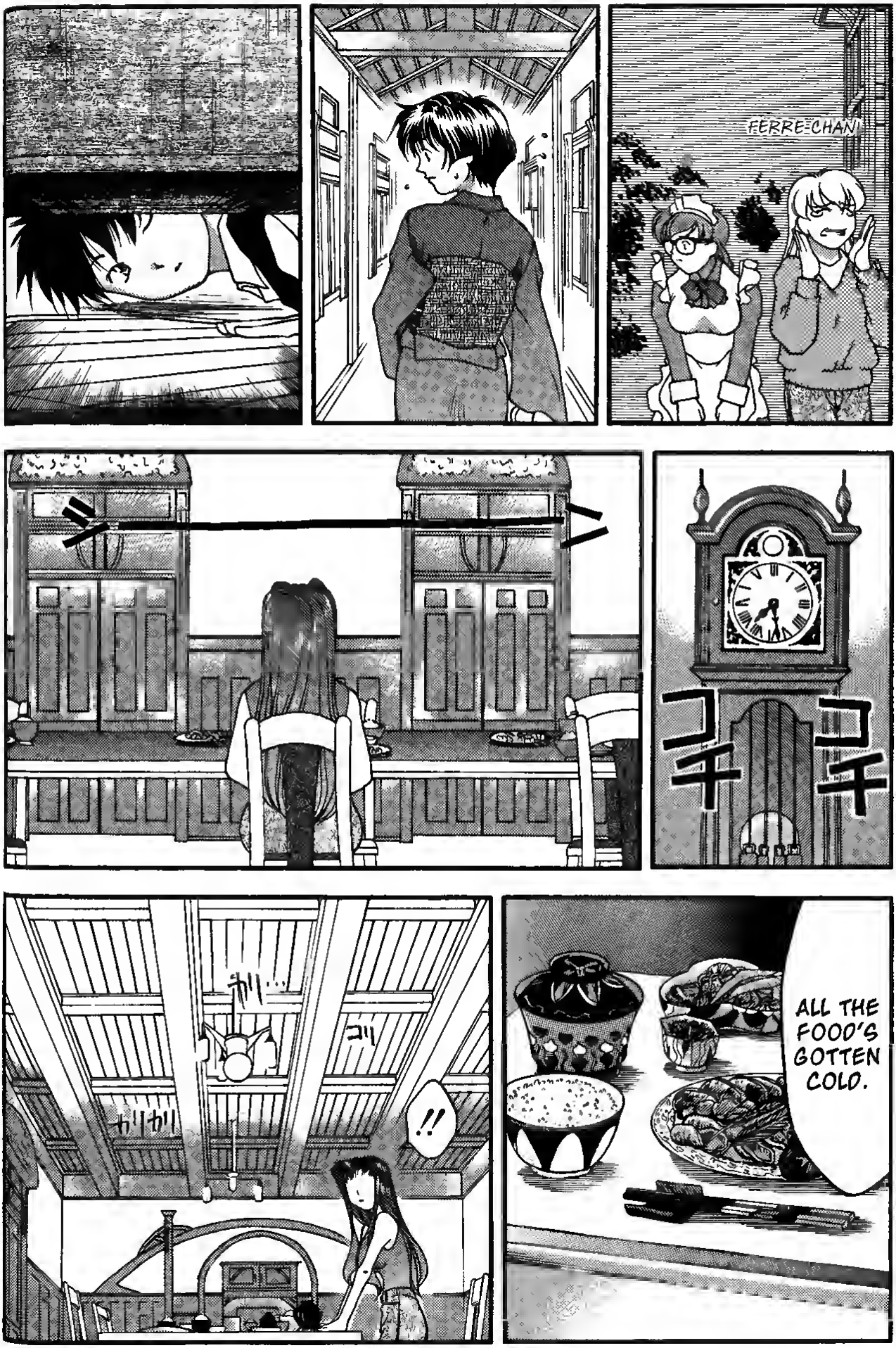
IS SOMETHING WRONG, KAORU-SAMA?!
N-NO, IT'S NOTHING.
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, MIYABI-SAN?
OH, YEAH... IT'S NO BIG DEAL...
THAT'S STRANGE...
I WAS POSITIVE I LEFT IT HERE.
I JUST CAN'T FIND MY FOUNTAIN PEN.
WHAT?!
AAAAAHHH!!


HYAAA!!
WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE ABOUT?
HEY!! GIVE THAT BACK!
WHAT?!
WHAT?!
チョロ
チョロ〜
ピ〜ル〜
OH!
OH!
GOTCHA !!
にゃあ
OKAY!
STOP THAT THING, TINA-SAN!!
HYYYAAAA!!
AH!!
チャ
タタッ

AAAH!!
OH N-NO... TEE HEE HEE!
もぞ
もぞ
もぞ
FREEZE, FERRET!!
KYAAAAHH!
NOT ANOTHER VILGE!
IT'S WIZZING ON THE RUG!
EEEEEK!!

AS MANAGER OF THE ESTATE, I HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO PROTECT THE MANSION OF THE RENOWNED SAKURABA FAMILY.
THAT'S IT! I'VE HAD ENOUGH! TOMORROW THAT THING GOES BACK WHERE IT CAME FROM!!
WOW. MIYABI-SAN'S REALLY LOST IT.
ARE WE CLEAR ?!!
IF YOU HAVING A PET MEANS I FAIL AT MY DUTY, THEN YOU WON'T HAVE A PET!
OKAY, EVERY-ONE! TIME FOR DINNER!
sigh
I DON'T THINK SHE'S GOING TO BUDGE ON THIS. THE FERRET'S GOING BACK.


AAAAHHH!!
WHOOPS! I ALMOST FORGOT, I HAVE TO FEED THE FERRET...
I...
If anything happened to her, I...
ふえぇ～ん
EEEHHH!!?
K-KAORUUUU! THE FERRET BROKE LOOSE!!
ぱた ぱた
You look over there!!
OKAY!!
DON'T PANIC! FAN OUT AND START SEARCHING!
THE STUPID RODENT'S CAUSING PROBLEMS EVEN TO THE VERY END...


FERRE-CHAN!
コチコチ
カリ…
コリ
カリカリ
!!
ALL THE FOOD'S GOTTEN COLD.

!!
キュ...
WHAT COULD IT BE?
IS IT COMING FROM BACK HERE ...?!
WHERE'S THAT NOISE COMING FROM?
IS SHE OKAY ?!
WHAT? WHERE ?!
KAORU-DONO!! I FOUND IT!!
AOI-SAMA!!
WH-WHAT SHOULD WE DO...?
OH NO!! SHE'S SQUISHED!
I FOUND IT, BUT...

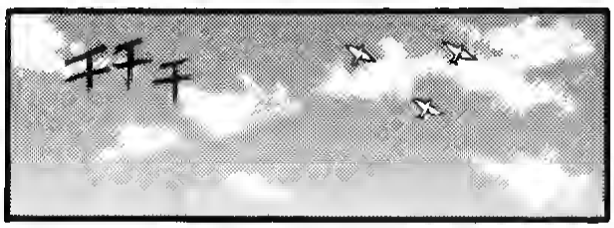
I-I CAN'T! I'LL HURT HER MORE!
あ～
GYAUU...
I'LL TRY.
CAN YOU GET YOUR HAND AROUND HER?
WE HAVE TO HELP HER, OR SHE'S GOING TO DIE...!
KUH...
AHH... SHE'S STOPPED MOVING!
HOLD ON, SWEETIE! WE'LL GET YOU OUT SOON.

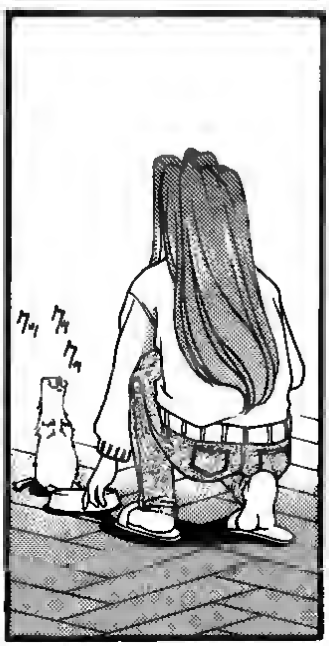
うぅぅ
ALL RIGHT !!
KAORU, CAN'T YOU MOVE IT?!
KAORU-DONO... GET OUT OF THE WAY!
huff
huff
huff
MIYABI-SAN?!
Uwaaaann! She's gonna die!
IT'S NO USE. IT'S TOO HEAVY...
RRRRR!
ハッ!

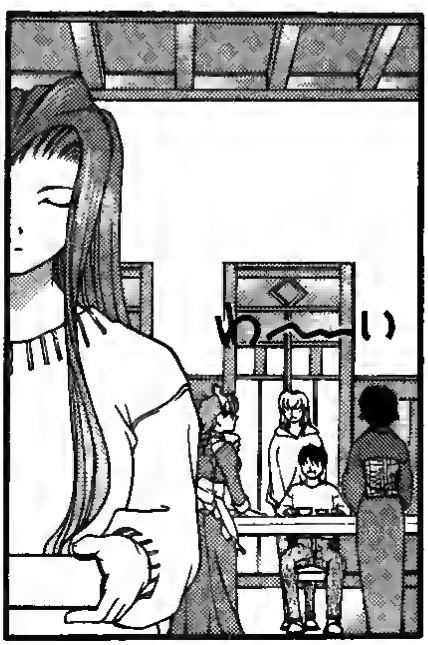
BOSS?
MIYABI-SAN!
MIYABI-SAN?!
.....

THINGS CAN BE REPLACED...
...BUT LIVING CREATURES ...

COME ON, JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE!!
キュー
キュイ
バキー
GUHA!
1ロ
!!
チョロ
OW...







End of Chapter 26: Aigan—Fondness

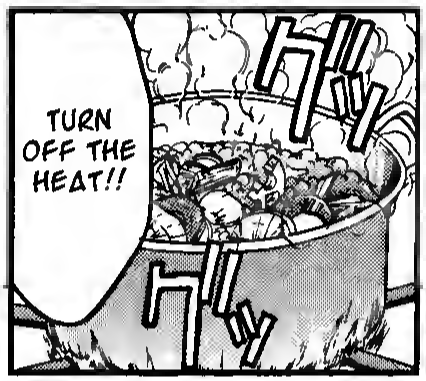
藍より青し

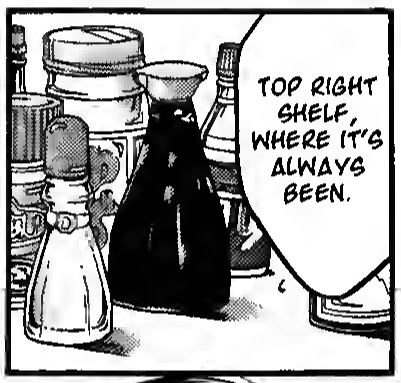
第二十七話　挿頭草―かざしぐさ―

CHAPTER 27 KAZASHIGUSA HOLLYHOCK

TAE-CHIIIIN! WHERE'S THE BLACK PEPPER?!

YIKES! OKAY!


TURN OFF THE HEAT!!
ゴッ
ゴッ

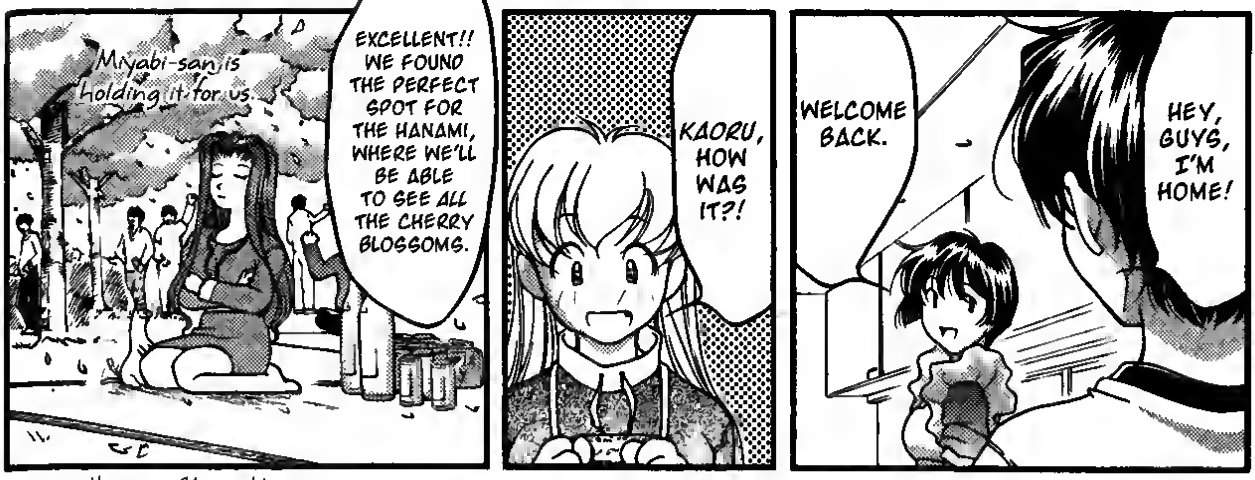

TOP RIGHT SHELF, WHERE IT'S ALWAYS BEEN.

WHOAAA! THAT LOOKS SO GOOD !!
I'M DONE!

モグモグ
Which one? Which one?
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A TASTE?
THIS IS DELICIOUS!!
THE FLAVOR BEGINS AS SOMETHING SO SIMPLE, AND THEN EXPLODES...
THIS TAKES SNACK FOOD TO A WHOLE OTHER LEVEL!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
I'VE FINISHED COOKING, AS WELL... BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN FOLLOW THAT!

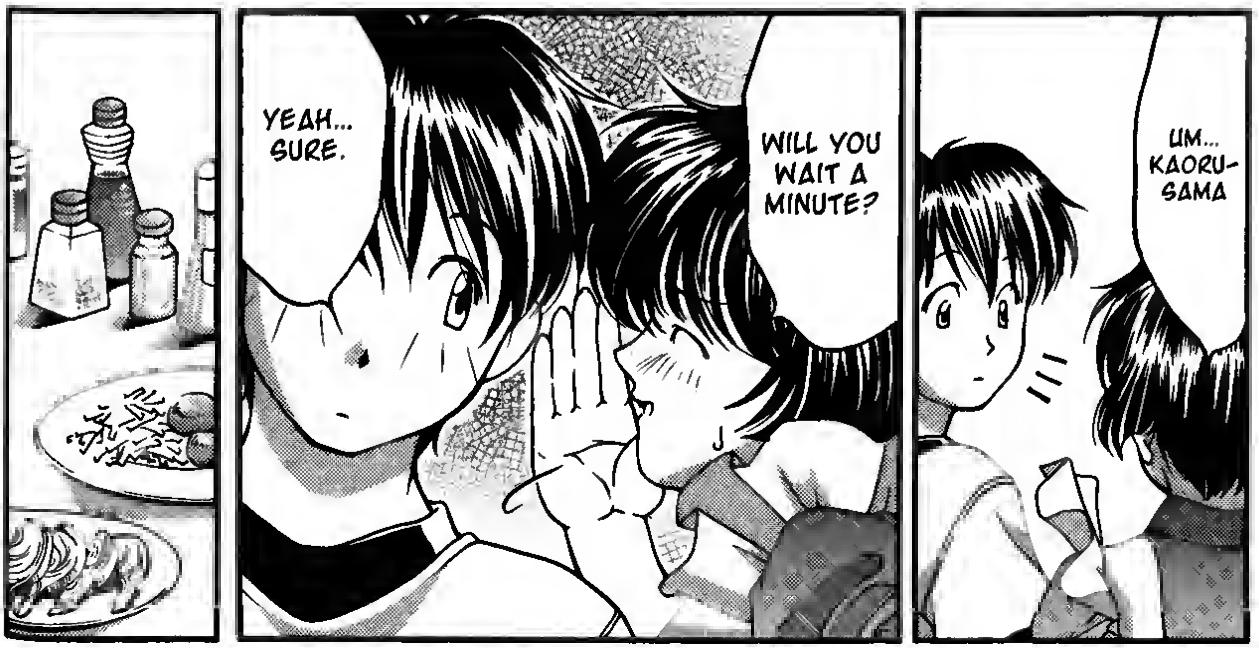
THE STRAWBERRY JAM CURRY WAS KIND OF SQUISHY...
THEY WERE PRETTY TRICKY TO MAKE.
Gimme a bite!
OH, MAN...MY MOUTH IS WATERING LOOKING AT THOSE GYOZA.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, JUST SAY SO! YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO DRAMATIC ABOUT IT!
Who doesn't like strawberries?
Oh! Are you alright?!
OKAY, MY TURN AT THE PLATE!

ホレ
TRY IT. YOU'LL THANK ME.
IT'S A CULINARY DELICACY!
CAN HUMANS EAT THIS?!
ACCEPT YOUR FATE! EAT MY FOOD!!
NOOOO! I LIKE MY STOMACH JUST THE WAY IT IS!!
IT...IT'S GOOD...!
ぱく
WHADDAYA THINK?!
Does it hurt?
IT IS GOOD, ISN'T IT?
gah
I win!
ha ha!
How?!
No fooling?


Miyabi-san is holding it for us.
EXCELLENT!! WE FOUND THE PERFECT SPOT FOR THE HANAMI, WHERE WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE ALL THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS.
KAORU, HOW WAS IT?!
WELCOME BACK.
HEY, GUYS, I'M HOME!

Hanami: Cherry blossom viewing

HEH. I'M SORRY. I'M NOT QUITE READY YET, BUT PLEASE GO AHEAD WITHOUT ME.
LET'S GATHER UP THE FOOD AND GO!
SWEET!!
WE'LL MEET YOU THERE.
NO WORRIES!



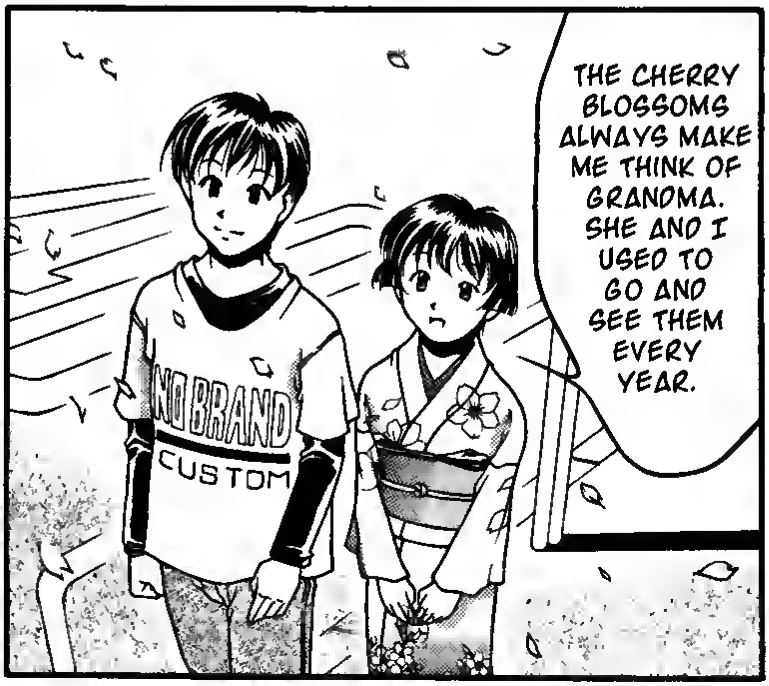
HEY, TINA!! WAIT UP!
NO BRAND
WELL, WE'LL SEE YOU LATER THEN.
REALLY ?!
I don't want her getting lost on the way.
I'M GONNA HANG BACK AND GO WITH AOI-CHAN.
NO BRAND
カチャ
NO BRAND
カアアア

THANK YOU FOR WAITING, KAORU-SAMA.

YEAH, IT'S GORGEOUS!!
And so are you.
DO YOU REALLY LIKE IT ?!
まぁまぁ
THAT'S A BEAUTIFUL KIMONO.
THANK GOODNESS ...
WHA-?!
HUH?!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH, KAORU-SAMA...

THIS KIMONO IS ACTUALLY QUITE OLD. IT'S A HAND-ME-DOWN FROM MY GRAND-MOTHER.
I'M SORRY...
SHE WAS MY BEST FRIEND UP UNTIL FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN SHE PASSED AWAY.
PRETTY MUCH. MY MOTHER AND FATHER WERE ALWAYS SO CAUGHT UP IN THEIR WORK...
I GUESS SHE WAS AROUND A LOT, HUH? IS SHE THE ONE THAT RAISED YOU?
AAAH!!

THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS ARE SO PRETTY!!


THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS ALWAYS MAKE ME THINK OF GRANDMA. SHE AND I USED TO GO AND SEE THEM EVERY YEAR.
NO BRAND
CUSTOM

.....

I USED TO WHINE TO HER ALL THE TIME ABOUT HOW MUCH I LIKED IT. I BEGGED HER TO GIVE IT TO ME.
Grandma, why can't I wear your kimono?!
THIS IS THE KIMONO SHE'D WEAR ON OUR TRIPS.
I DON'T KNOW. SHOULDN'T A LITTLE GIRL LIKE YOU WANT WESTERN CLOTHES MORE THAN THIS OLD THING? MAYBE YOU DO BELONG IN YOUR FAMILY'S DRY GOODS STORE.
WHENEVER MY PLEAS GOT OUT OF HAND, MY GRANDMOTHER TOLD ME--

...OUR DRESSES ARE DYED WITH THE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS OF THE PEOPLE WHO WEAR THEM.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO WEAR A KIMONO, YOU MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER...
TO WEAR A KIMONO...
...IS TO WEAR THE FEELINGS THAT HAVE BEEN BESTOWED UPON ITS FABRIC.
MAYBE THAT'S TOO ABSTRACT FOR A MIND SO YOUNG.
THE KIMONO HAS FEELINGS ?!
!?

AOI...
WHEN YOU GROW UP, THIS DRESS WILL BECOME YOURS.
REALLY?!
AND WHEN YOU WEAR IT, I WANT YOU TO WALK DOWN A ROAD LINED WITH SAKURA TREES ARM-IN-ARM WITH THE MAN WHO WILL BE YOUR LIFE'S COMPANION.
I ALREADY KNOW WHO THAT IS!!
HMM ?!
AOI IS GOING TO BE WITH KAORU-SAMA FROM THE HANABISHI!!

THIS REMINDS ME OF HOW I USED TO ALWAYS WALK WITH YOUR GRANDFATHER WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE.
REALLY? OH, THAT'S RIGHT... FROM THE HANABISHI...
THIS WAS YOUR GRAND-FATHER'S FAVORITE KIMONO FOR ME TO WEAR.
IF THE LOVE WOVEN INTO THIS KIMONO IS HANDED DOWN TO YOU...
THEN I'M SURE THAT HANABISHI BOY WILL...

...ADORE THIS OUTFIT JUST AS MUCH AS MY HUSBAND DID.

IT ALL MAKES SENSE TO ME NOW.
THIS KIMONO...
...WAS DYED WITH HER EVERY EXPRESSION OF LOVE.

KAORU-SAMA...
HMM, THAT'S A GOOD STORY.
WHEN I WEAR THIS KIMONO...
...I FEEL LIKE I LOVE YOU EVEN MORE. LIKE I'VE LOVED YOU FOREVER.

TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT YOU LIKE THIS KIMONO, AS WELL, MUST BE THE KEY THAT UNLOCKED ITS HEART.
NO BRAND
CUSTOM

ワクワク
とんちゃん、とんちゃん

COME AND SERVE YOUR MASTER!!
KAORUUU! MY LOVE SLAVE!
OH, GREAT. TINA'S ALREADY BLITZED!
YOU BET, KAORU-SAMA!!
ARE YOU COMING, AOI-CHAN?

End of Chapter 27: Kazashigusa—Cherry Blossoms

藍より青し

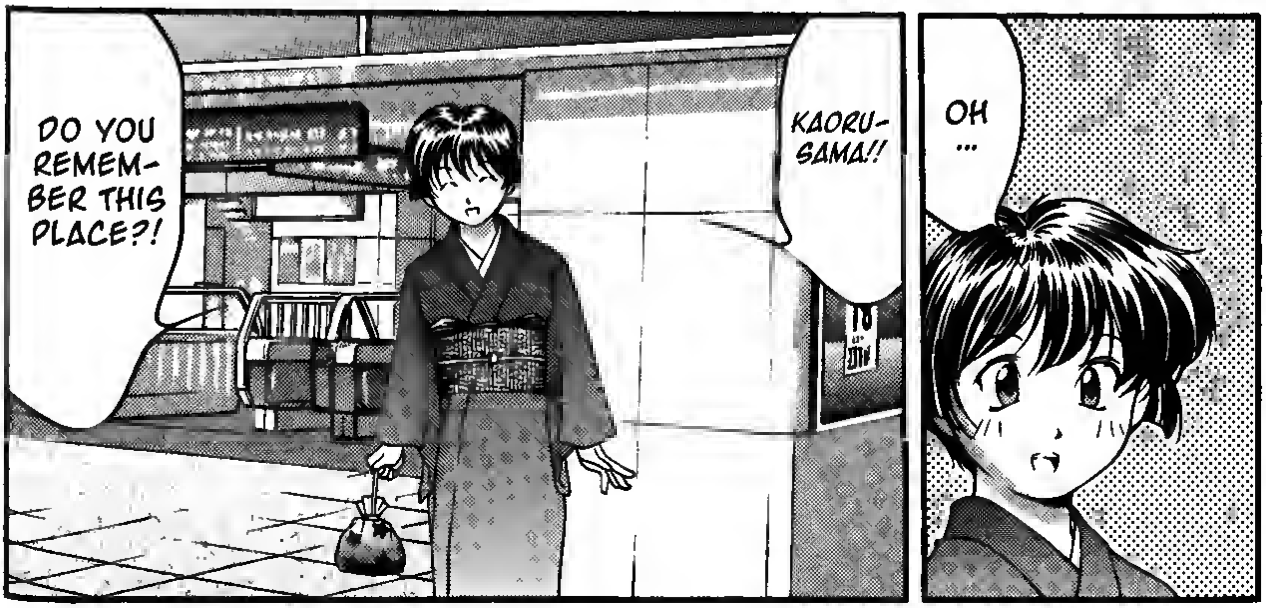
AI YORI AOSHI

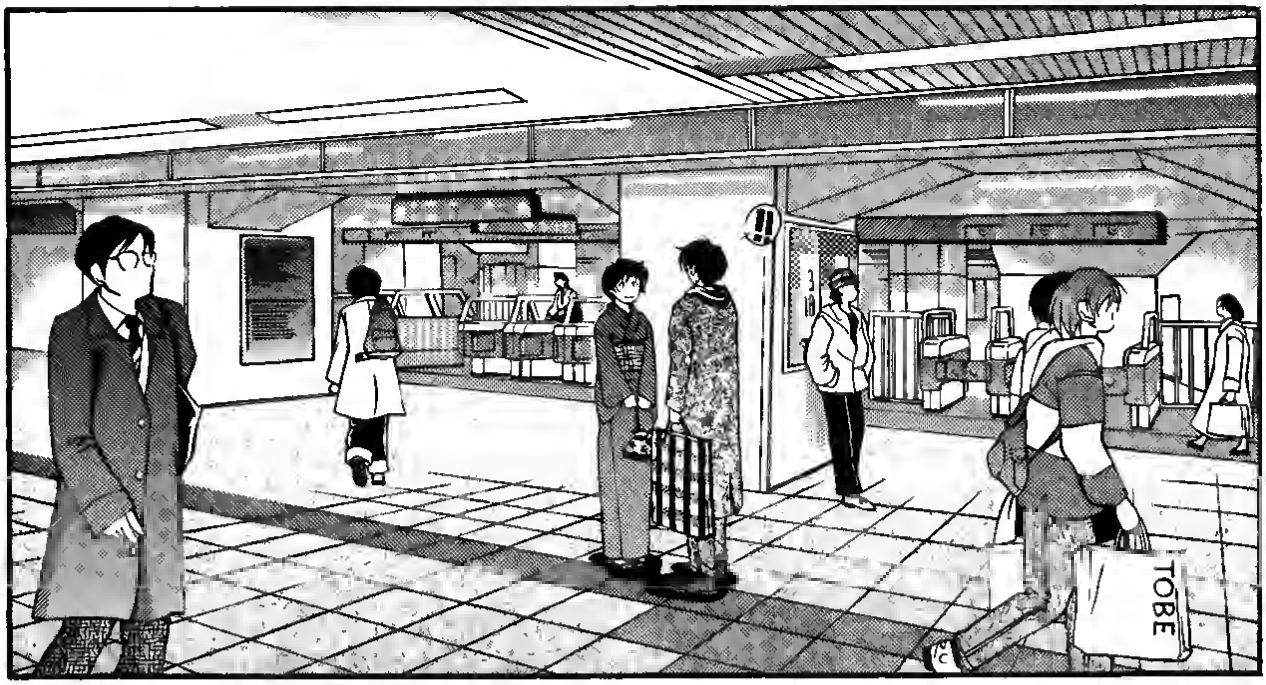
第二十八話　春秋―しゅんじゅう―

CHAPTER 28 SHUNJUU SPRING AND AUTUMN

I APPRECIATE YOU COMING WITH ME.
I THINK I ONLY NEEDED TO PICK UP THE ONE THING...

The ferret needs food. And a new toy.
See if they have a GameBoy version of Dancing Furby!!
I need a new horror novel.
I FEEL BAD. YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING SHOPPING, AND THE WHOLE HOUSE GIVES YOU A LIST.


DO YOU REMEMBER THIS PLACE?!
KAORU-SAMA!!
OH ...


TOBE

CAN YOU BELIEVE ...
...A WHOLE YEAR HAS ALREADY GONE BY?

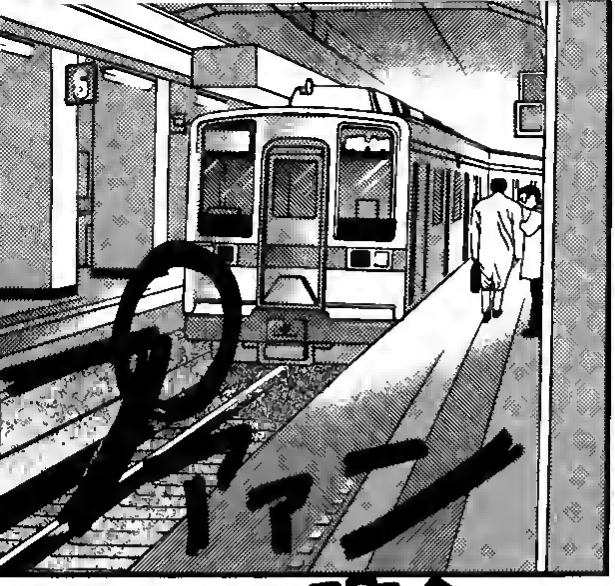
I DO! THIS IS WHERE WE MET!
Yes...

THAT WAS ACTUALLY PRETTY OUT OF CHARACTER FOR ME.

I REMEMBER I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY LUCK THAT SUCH A HANDSOME MAN WOULD HELP ME FIX MY HANDO.

REALLY...? IT'S BEEN THAT LONG.

Why won't my ticket go through...?
THERE WAS JUST SOMETHING ABOUT YOU THAT MADE ME WANT TO HELP YOU.
OUT LIKE A LIGHT.
NUH-UH! REALLY?!
ACTUALLY, YOU FELL ASLEEP AND WE ENDED UP RIDING IN CIRCLES.
YES...BUT WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT NOW, IT FEELS LIKE IT WAS REALLY SHORT.
MAN, IT'S LIKE THE WHOLE NIGHT IS FLOODING BACK NOW! LIKE OUR TRAIN RIDE...
GOTCHA!
JUST KIDDING!!
EEEHH!?
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YOU MIGHT'VE EVEN BEEN DROOLING A LITTLE...

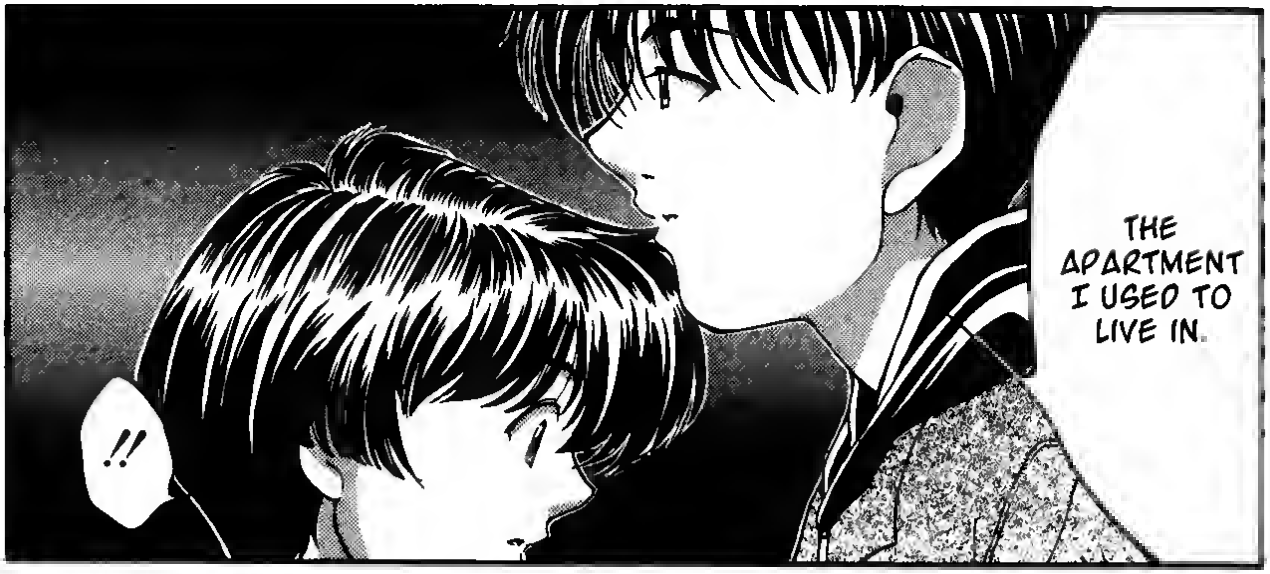


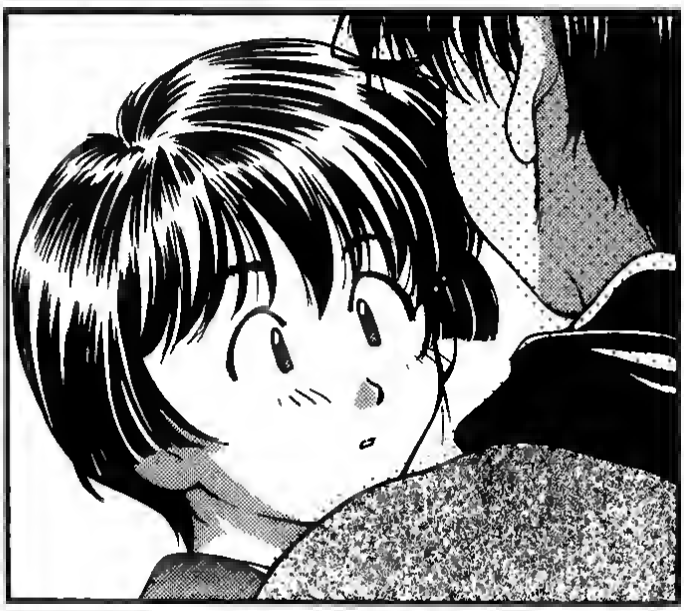
You meanie! That's terrible!
Ha Ha Ha

YOU'D THINK ON A SUNDAY IT WOULD BE A LITTLE LESS CROWDED...

!!
...I'M SORRY.

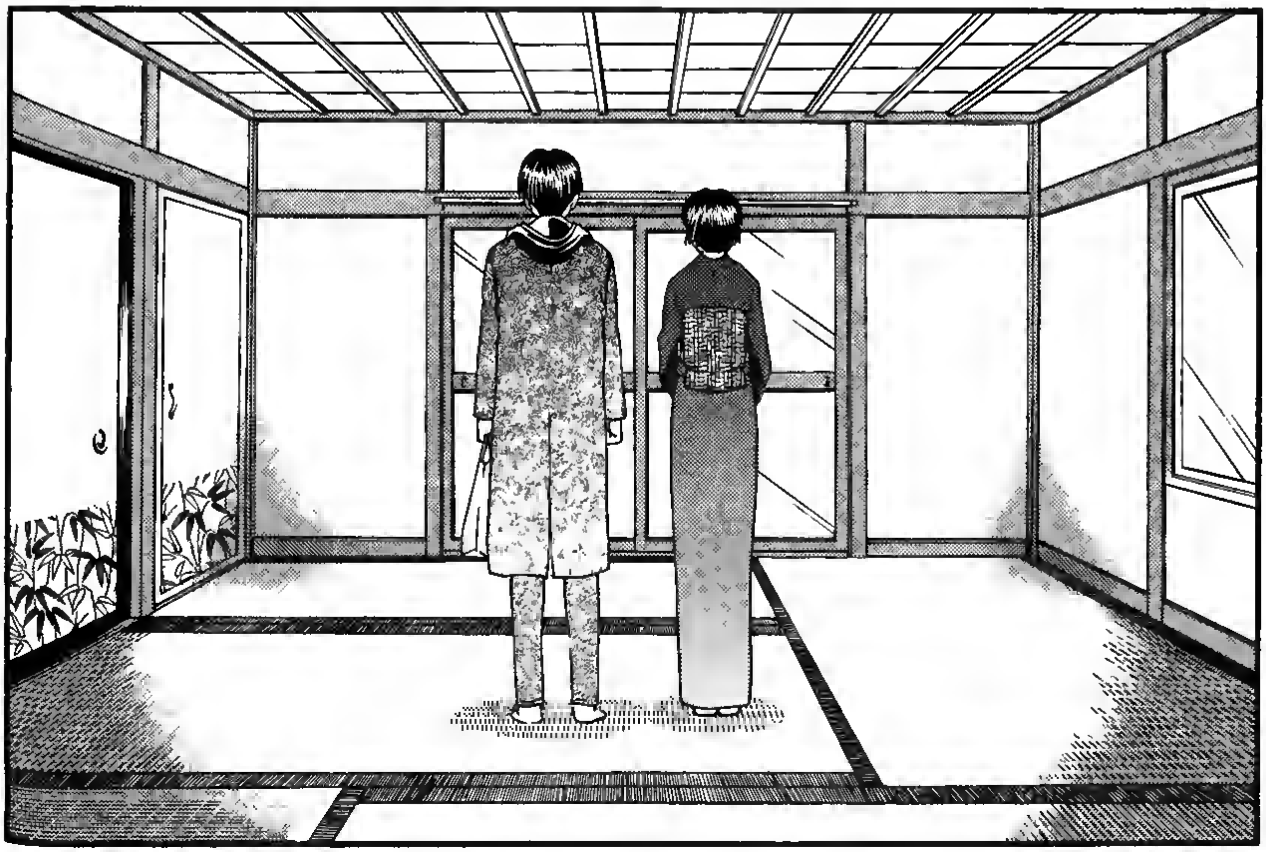
.....
Are you okay?!
HUH?!
YES...I'M PERFECTLY FINE...
HEY... AOI-CHAN
YOU KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD GO SEE ?!
WHAT'S THAT?

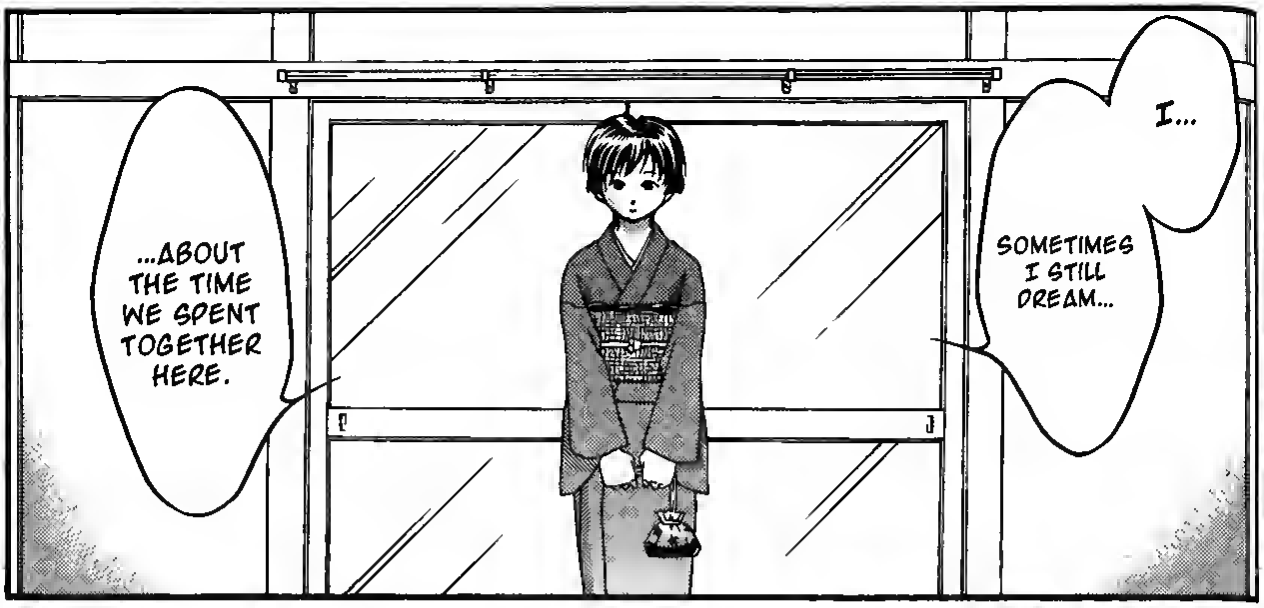

!!
THE APARTMENT I USED TO LIVE IN.



HEY... IT'S UNLOCKED!
WEIRD...
I THINK IT'S STILL VACANT, ACTUALLY.
Please read before using electricity
Application for Use of Electricity
Electric Company
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. IT HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL...
Then again, it's only been a year.
カン
カン
.....
.....
GEEZ. THIS BRINGS BACK MEMORIES.
I KNOW. I'M GETTING A LITTLE EMOTIONAL.

I'LL SAY...
A LOT OF THINGS HAPPENED IN THIS ROOM...




I...
SOMETIMES I STILL DREAM...
...ABOUT THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER HERE.

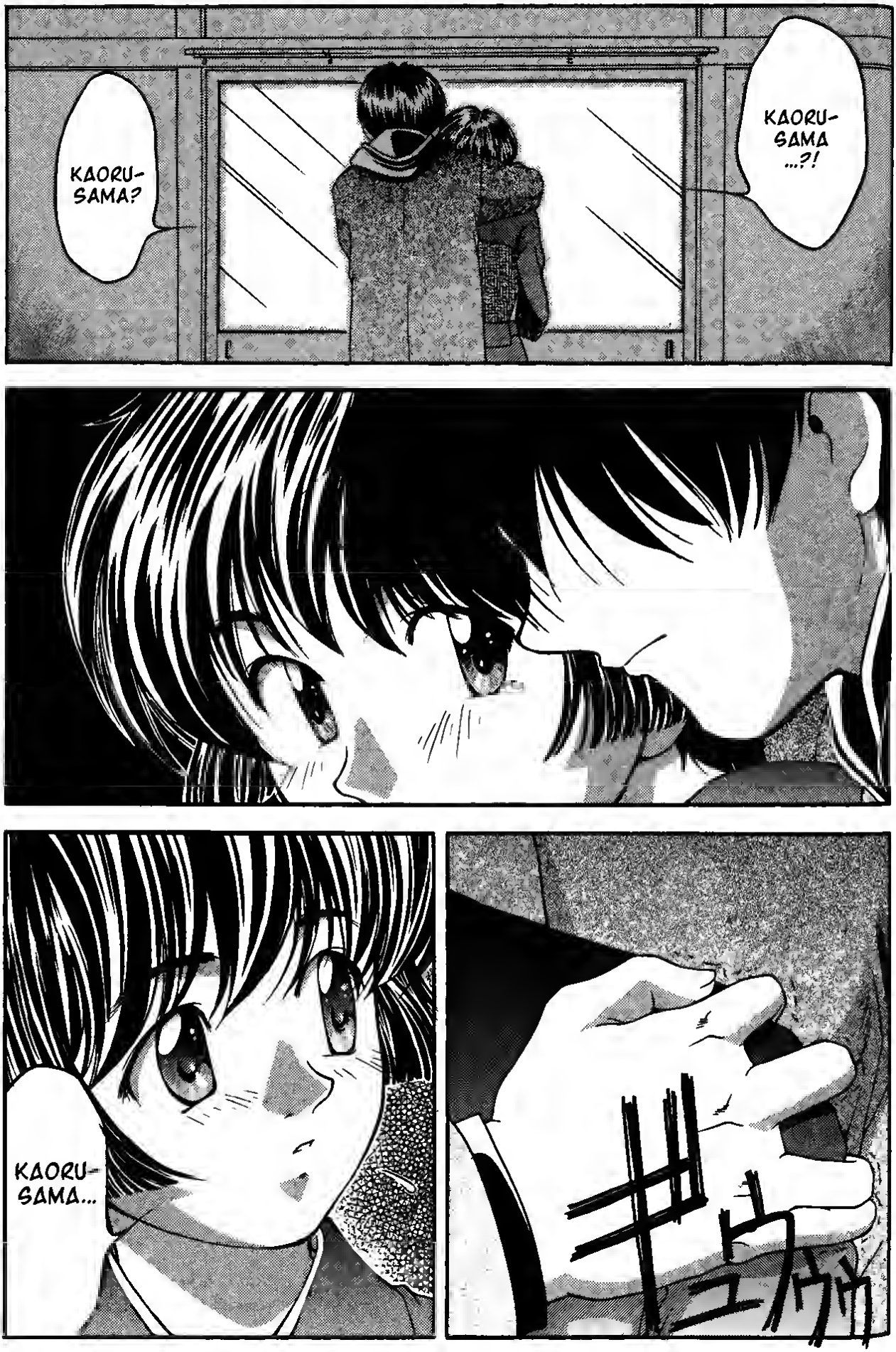
ONLY IN MY DREAMS, NO MATTER WHAT I SAY, YOU WON'T TELL ME ANYTHING...

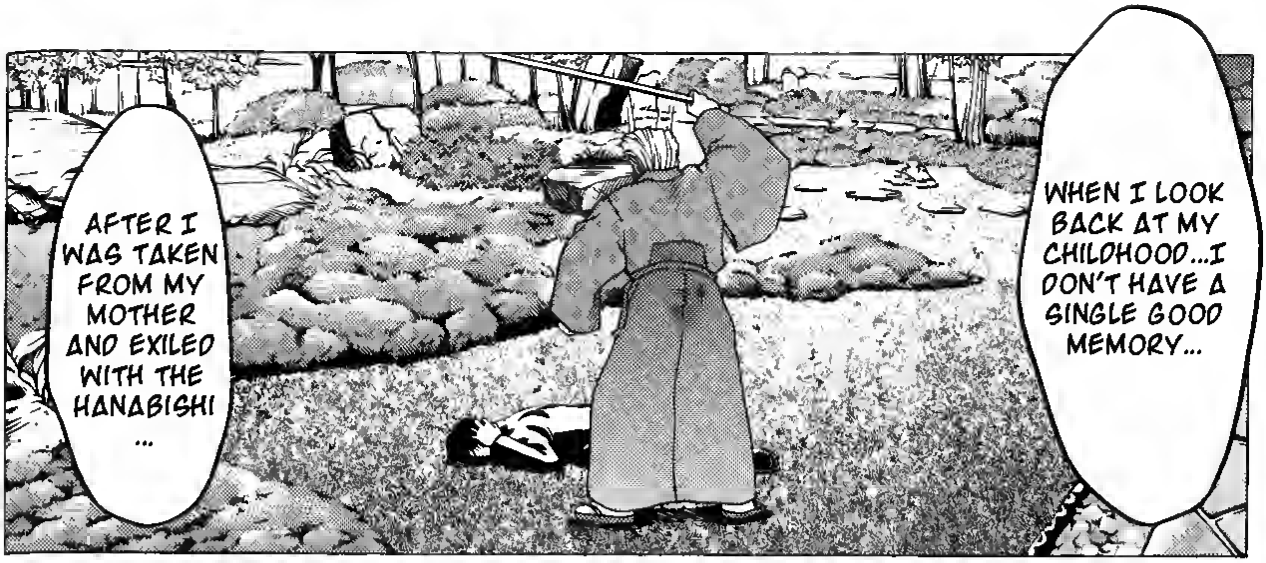
YOU SEEM COLD... AND LONELY...
...AND YOU LOOK AT ME MUCH LIKE THE WAY YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME NOW.

...AND TRY TO GET YOU TALKING WITH FUN STORIES.
You won't believe what happened...
Kaoru-sama, it's your favorite, fried fish!
I ALWAYS TRY TO CHEER YOU UP, MAKE US SOME FOOD...
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO, YOUR MOOD NEVER CHANGES.
WHEN I REACH THE POINT WHERE I THINK THE TEARS WON'T EVER STOP, I WAKE UP...
I FEEL TRAPPED. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

...AND DISCOVER I AM CRYING IN REAL LIFE.
AOI-CHAN...
AN INCREDIBLY... ANXIOUS FEELING THEN SPREADS OVER ME...
I'M SURE I...JUST WORRY TOO MUCH, AND THAT'S WHY I HAVE THESE DREAMS...
I'M SORRY, KAORU-SAMA...

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT...


KAORU-SAMA?
KAORU-SAMA ...?!
KAORU-SAMA...


AFTER I WAS TAKEN FROM MY MOTHER AND EXILED WITH THE HANABISHI ...
WHEN I LOOK BACK AT MY CHILDHOOD...I DON'T HAVE A SINGLE GOOD MEMORY...

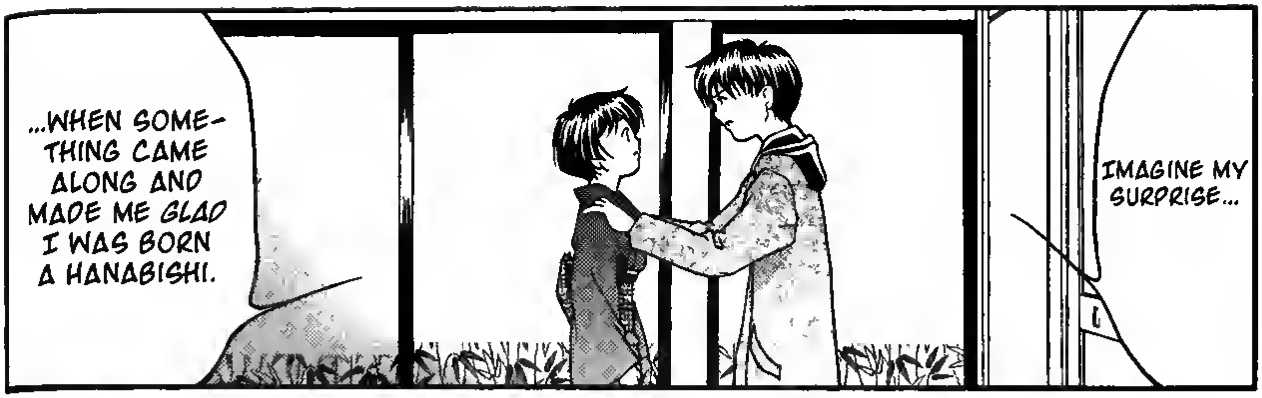
...BECAUSE I DON'T EVER WANT TO BECOME ONE OF THEM.

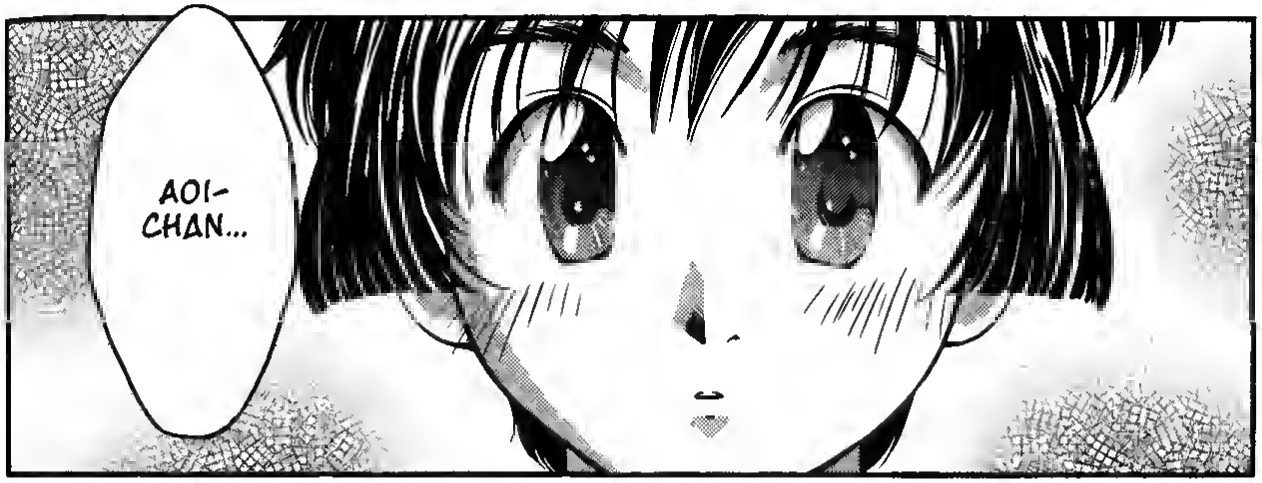
WHEN I CONSIDER THAT HANABISHI BLOOD FLOWS IN MY VEINS, IT ENRAGES ME...
...AS THE YEARS PASSED AND MY MOTHER DIED...

I SOCKED AWAY SOME MONEY, AND WHEN IT WAS ENOUGH, I LEFT THEM AND NEVER LOOKED BACK.

.....

I WORKED A BUNCH OF DIFFERENT JOBS TO PAY FOR IT.
THIS WAS MY FIRST APARTMENT ON MY OWN.
I WANTED TO WASH THE WORD "FAMILY" OUT OF MY MIND.
I NEVER... I NEVER WANTED TO RELY ON ANYBODY EVER AGAIN.
...CURSED THE DAY I WAS BORN
UNTIL NOW, I ALWAYS...


...WHEN SOMETHING CAME ALONG AND MADE ME GLAD I WAS BORN A HANABISHI.
IMAGINE MY SURPRISE...


AOI-CHAN...

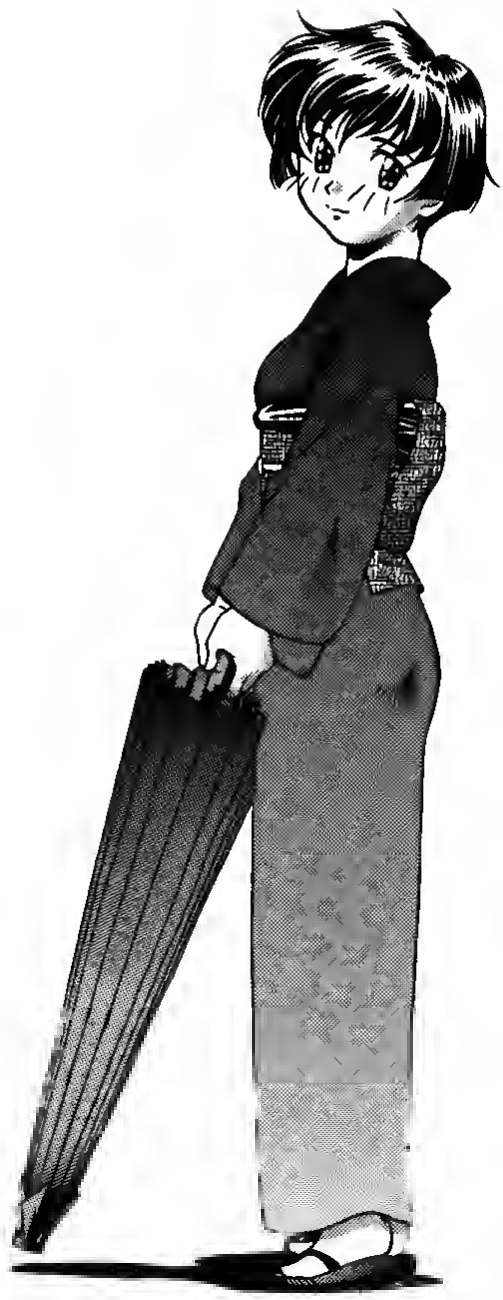
MEETING YOU, GETTING ENGAGED TO YOU ...
...THAT'S THE ONLY DECENT THING MY STINKIN' FAMILY EVER DID FOR ME THAT WAS ANY GOOD.

ポロ
KAORU-SAMA...
ポロ
I COULDN'T BE HAPPIER ...
...TO CALL YOU MY FIANCÉE.

End of Chapter 28: Shunjuu—Spring and Autumn

藍(あい)より青(あお)し

AI YORI AOSHI



藍より青し

第二十九話　胸懐―きょうかい―

CHAPTER 29 KYOUKAI THE HEART

I LOVE YOU...
...MORE THAN ANYTHING IN LIFE.
I'M HAPPY...
I'M SO HAPPY.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME...
IT'S THE FIRST TIME... YOU TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME!

AOI-CHAN...
I'M SORRY... FOR ALL THE TIMES...I WORRIED OVER NOTHING.
I... CONVINCED MY MOTHER TO LET ME STAY WITH YOU...
ドス
...BUT I NEVER KNEW HOW YOU REALLY FELT ABOUT ME.
SO MANY TIMES, I'VE WANTED TO ASK YOU...
...BUT I... I WAS TOO AFRAID OF WHAT YOU MIGHT SAY.
GOSH... I'M SORRY...
...I JUST FELT SO AWKWARD. IT'S HARD FOR ME--
PLEASE DON'T APOLOGIZE.
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, KAORU-SAMA.

IT'S MY OWN FAULT...
I GET OBSESSED OVER LITTLE THINGS AND FRET ABOUT THEM.
EVEN AFTER WE MET AS CHILDREN...
...I WOULD ALWAYS THINK ABOUT YOU AND GET FRIGHTENED AND NERVOUS.
I'D WONDER WHAT YOU WERE DOING...
WHAT KIND OF LIFE YOU WERE LEADING...
I WOULD WONDER...
...WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU WERE BECOMING.
THROUGHOUT MY CHILDHOOD, YOU WERE ALWAYS AT THE FRONT OF MY MIND.

ONE DAY THEY TOLD ME THAT THE DEAL WITH THE HANABISHI HAD BEEN BROKEN...
BUT...WHY?! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MARRIED!
WHAT ABOUT KAORU-SAMA...?
THEY SAID THAT?!
...BUT THE HANABISHI TOLD US THAT THEY COULD NO LONGER HONOR THEIR SIDE OF THE ARRANGEMENT.
I DON'T KNOW THE REASONS...
AOI-SAMA!!
IT'S NOT HIM, IS IT? DOES KAORU WANT THIS?!

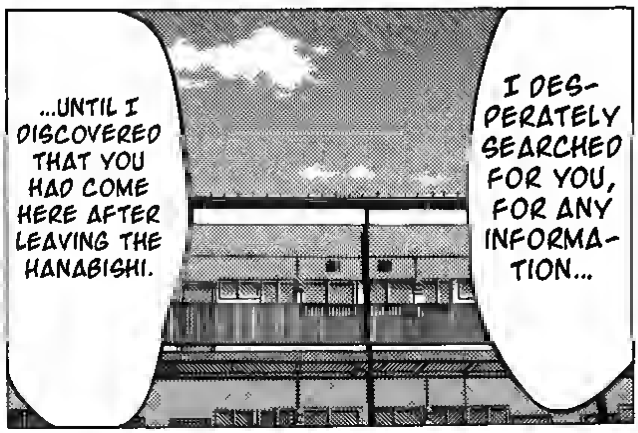
I KNOW YOU PROBABLY FEEL HURT, BUT...
THE ENGAGEMENT IS OFF.
IF YOU DON'T COOPERATE, YOU'LL ONLY BRING MORE DISTRESS TO YOUR FAMILY.
...YOU NEED TO MOVE FORWARD. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW OTHER APPLICANTS TO BE YOUR BETROTHED.

AOI-SAMA!!
NO...
I SAID, NO!! I WAS ABLE TO COME THIS FAR, TO WORK THIS HARD, BECAUSE I WAS REALLY IN LOVE WITH KAORU-SAMA!!
THERE IS NO ONE ELSE FOR ME! NO ONE!!! IT'S KAORU OR IT'S NOTHING!!

WAAAAH!!

メトロポリ
for Metr
I WORRIED MYSELF SICK ON THE WAY.
THE ONLY QUESTION UNANSWERED WAS THE KIND OF PERSON YOU HAD BECOME.

I CRIED UNTIL THERE WERE NO MORE TEARS LEFT.
I CRIED FOR DAYS AFTER THAT.


...UNTIL I DISCOVERED THAT YOU HAD COME HERE AFTER LEAVING THE HANABISHI.
I DES-PERATELY SEARCHED FOR YOU, FOR ANY INFORMA-TION...

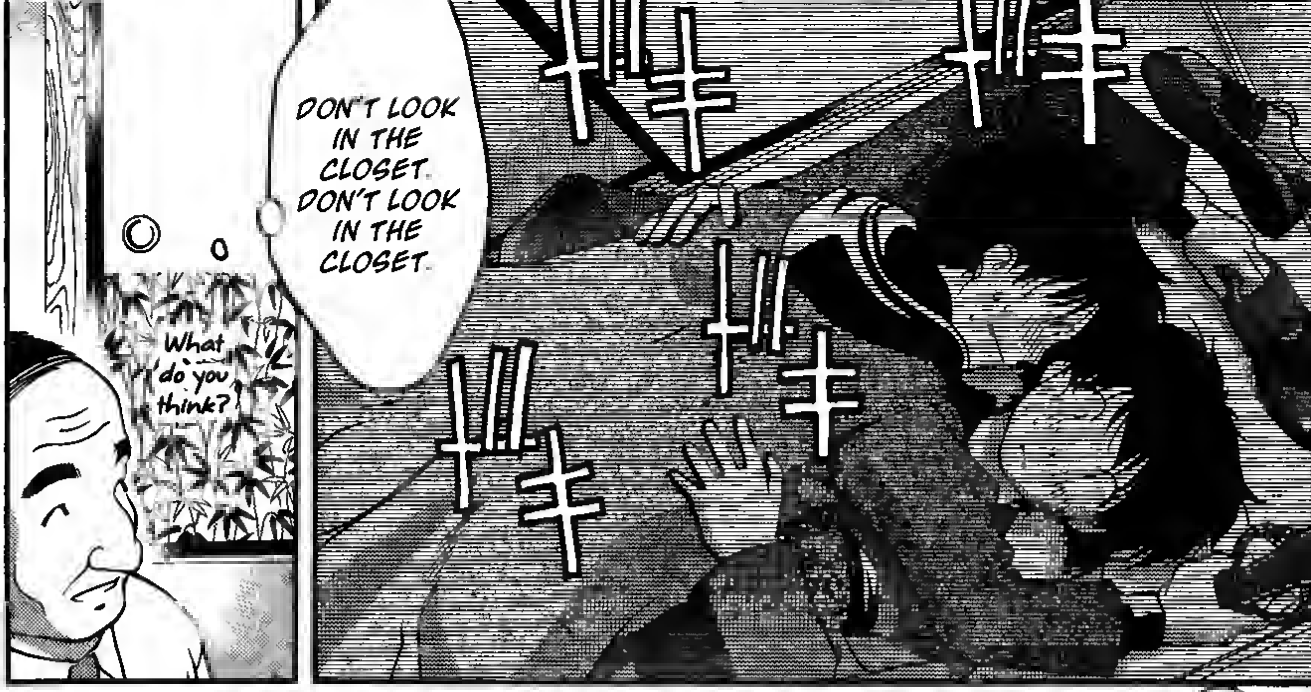
YOU WERE EXACTLY THE WAY...
NO...
I CAN'T DESCRIBE THE RELIEF I FELT WHEN I FOUND OUT THAT THE NICE BOY WHO HAD HELPED ME WAS ACTUALLY THE ONE I WAS LOOKING FOR.
KAORU-SAMA, YOU WERE...
...MORE WONDERFUL THAN I HAD FANTASIZED YOU BEING.

I COULDN'T BE MORE THRILLED TO LOVE YOU, AOI-CHAN.
KAORU-SAMA...I COULDN'T BE MORE THRILLED THAN TO HAVE THE MAN YOU BECAME AS MY FIANCÉ.
ぎゅ
ぽろ

I LOVE YOU!!
I LOVE YOU, KAORU-SAMA!!!

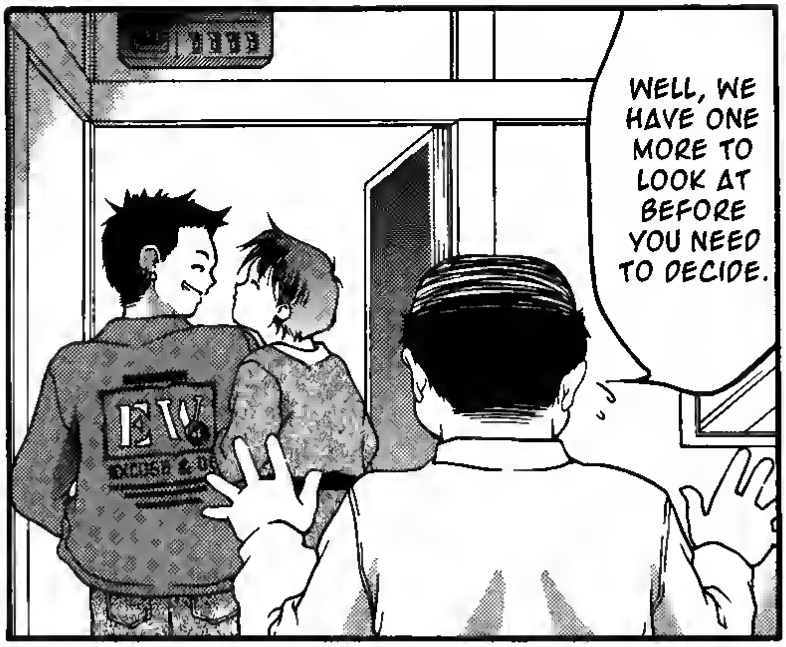
KAORU-SAMA...
AOI-CHAN...

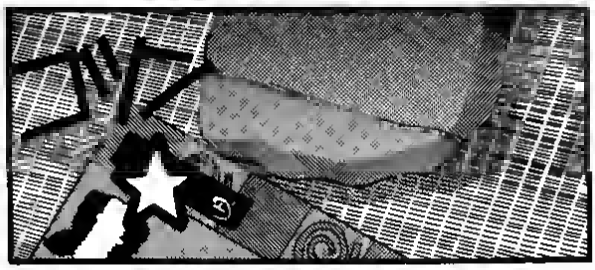
THIS IS A GREAT PLACE FOR A YOUNG COUPLE.
YOU GET PLENTY OF SUNLIGHT, AND IT'S QUIET.
IT'S A CORNER APARTMENT TOO. CAN'T BEAT THAT!
Good grief!
NOT AT THIS PRICE...
BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE A LOFT

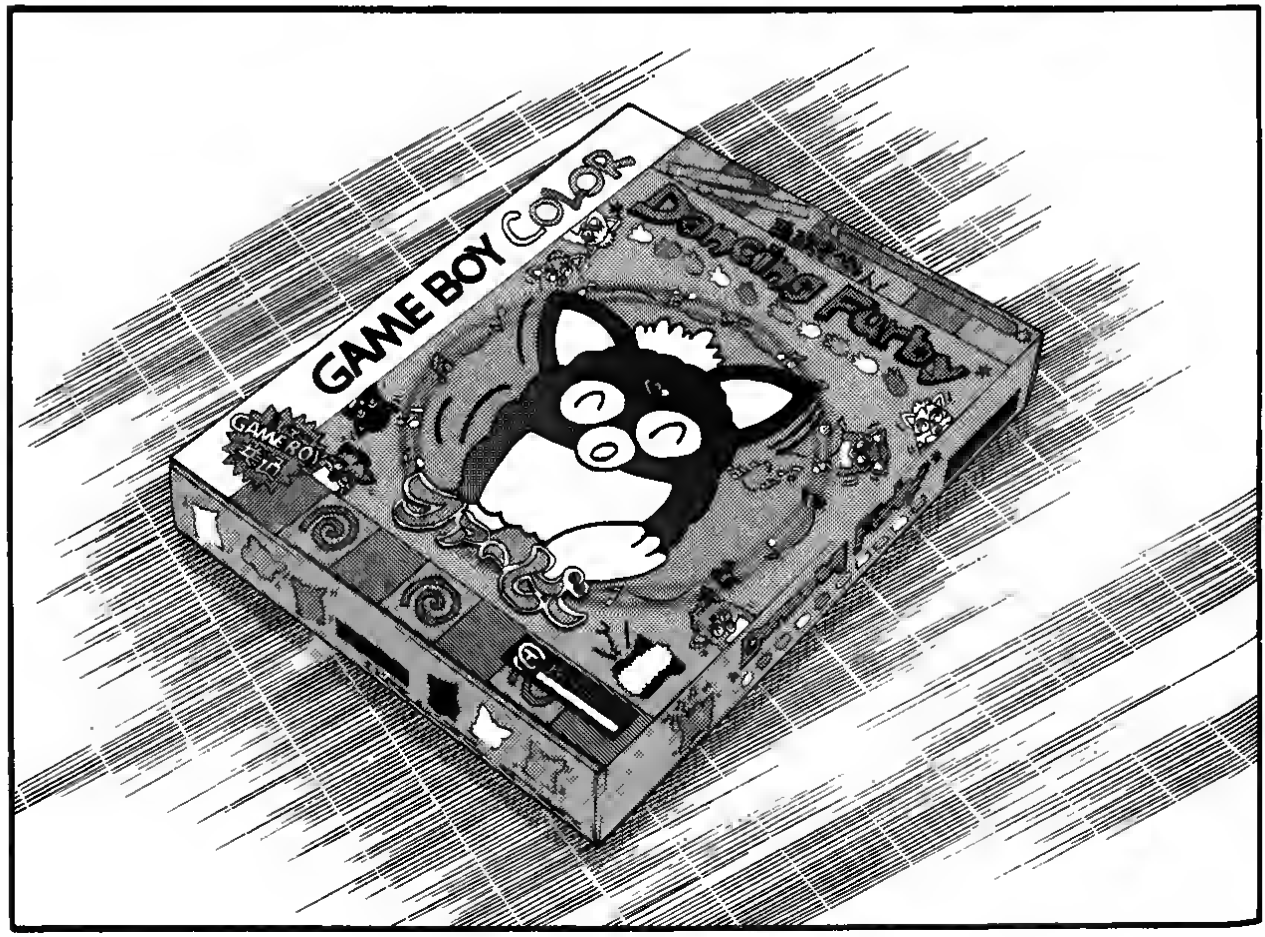

What do you think?
DON'T LOOK IN THE CLOSET. DON'T LOOK IN THE CLOSET.

IT'S NOT SMALL, IT'S COZY.
ISN'T IT A BIT SMALL FOR TWO PEOPLE?!

HMMMM, I SUPPOSE THAT'S TRUE...
DON'T OPEN IT, DON'T OPEN IT!
THINK ABOUT IT...WE'LL NEVER HAVE TO BE MORE THAN A FEW FEET APART.







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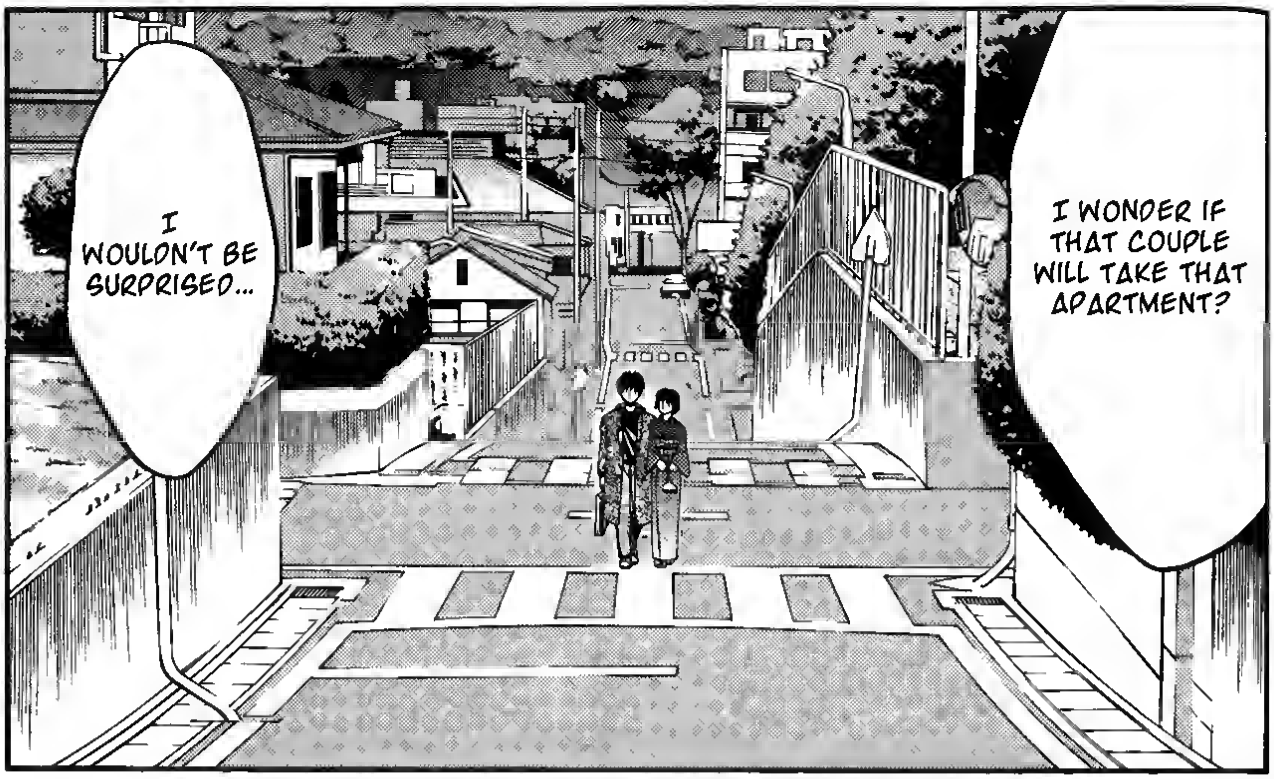
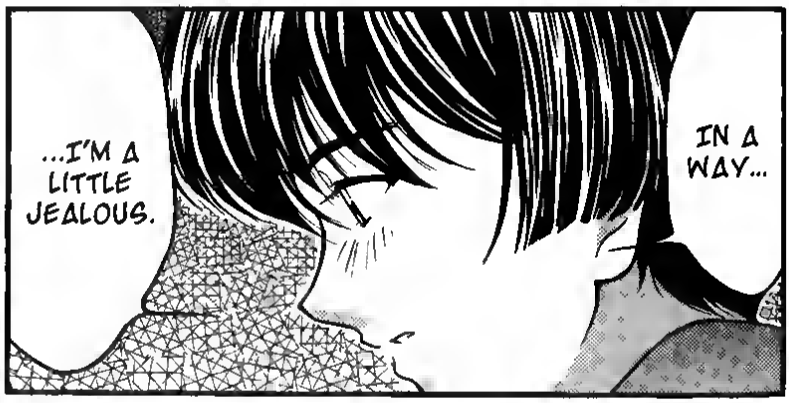
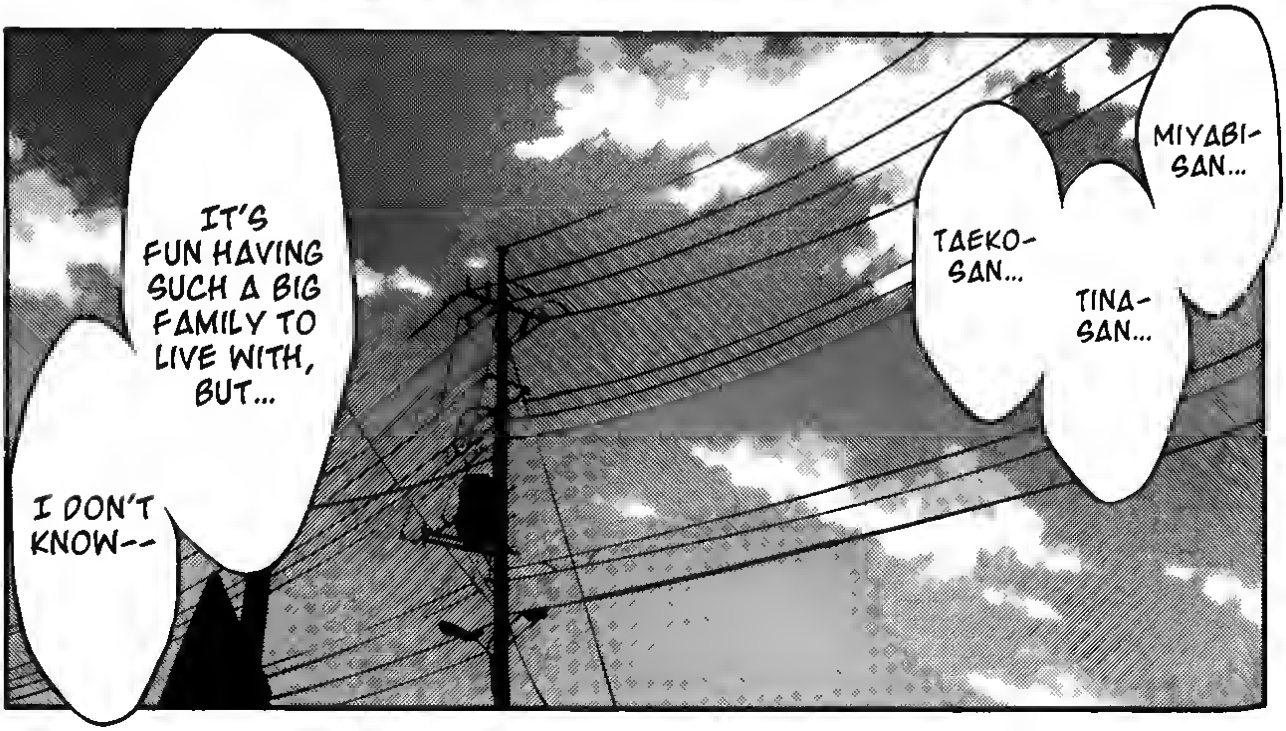
ハタン
?!
What's this doing here...?
ふう～
WE'RE SAVED...
YEAH.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY GO, IN CASE THEY COME BACK.


I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED...
I WONDER IF THAT COUPLE WILL TAKE THAT APARTMENT?

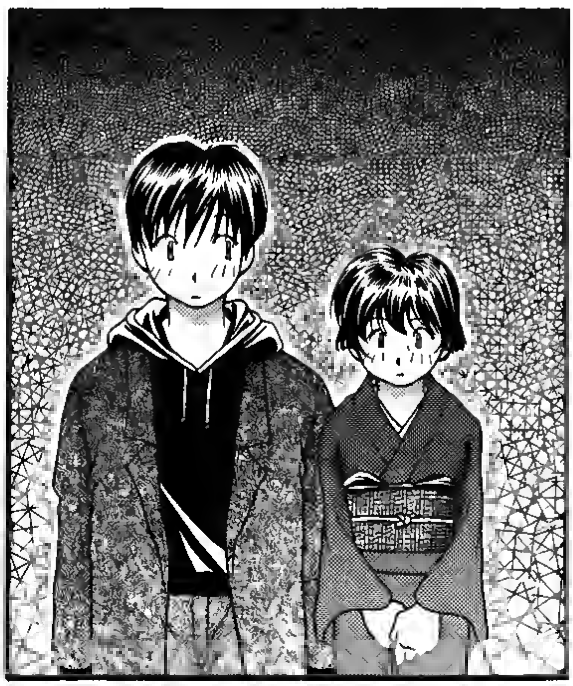
WHAT?


...I'M A LITTLE JEALOUS.
IN A WAY...


IT'S FUN HAVING SUCH A BIG FAMILY TO LIVE WITH, BUT...
I DON'T KNOW--
MIYABI-SAN...
TAEKO-SAN...
TINA-SAN...

SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE...
...HAD WE STAYED IN YOUR APART-MENT. WOULD WE BE EVEN CLOSER NOW?

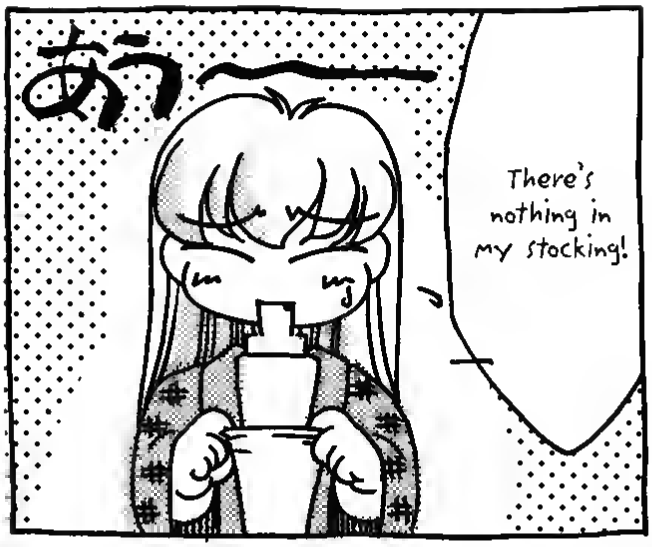
AOI-CHAN?
YES ?!



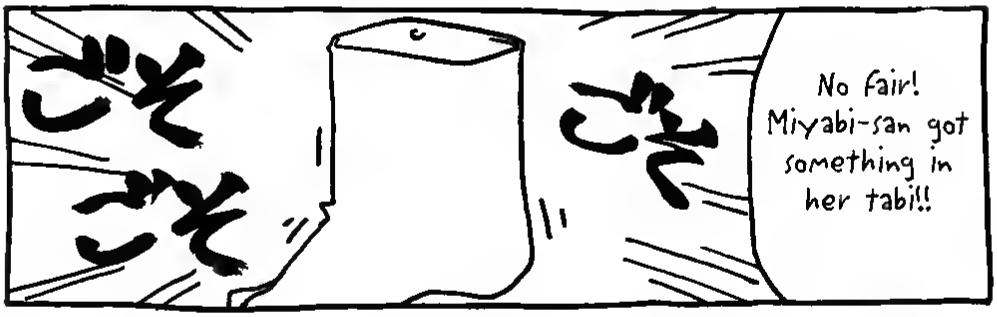
I SUPPOSE ...

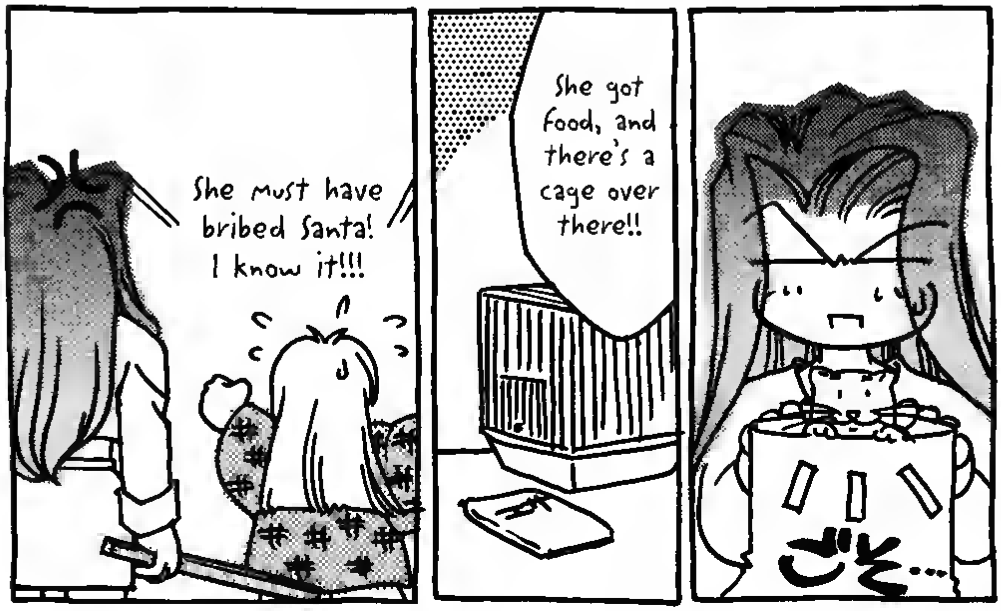
KAORU-SAMA
KA...

End of Chapter 29: Kyoukai—The Heart



Ai-Ao Theatre, part 6: Present





ASSIST THANKS

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Miyuki Nara.
School Izumi.
Tengusama.
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<STUDIO LITTLE COTTON>

NEXT TIME IN

藍より青し

AI YORI AOSHI™

An old friend from Kaoru's past turns up to rekindle old ties and a Golden Week holiday finds Aoi's friends and tenants on a trip to the mountains.

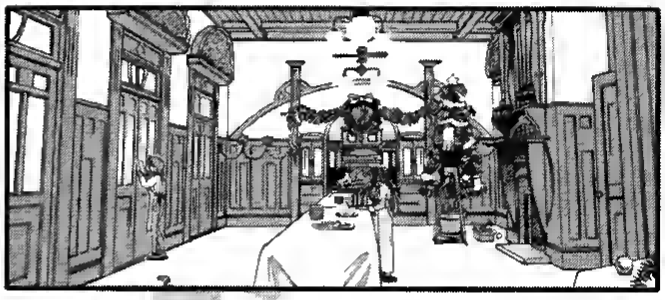
Ai Yori Aoshi Vol. 4—
Available July 2004

GLOSSARY

藍より青し

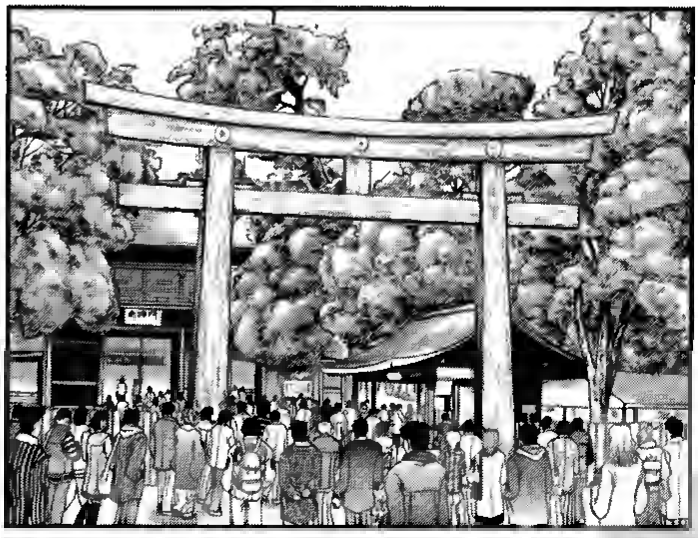
AI YORI AOSHI™

Christmas in Japan

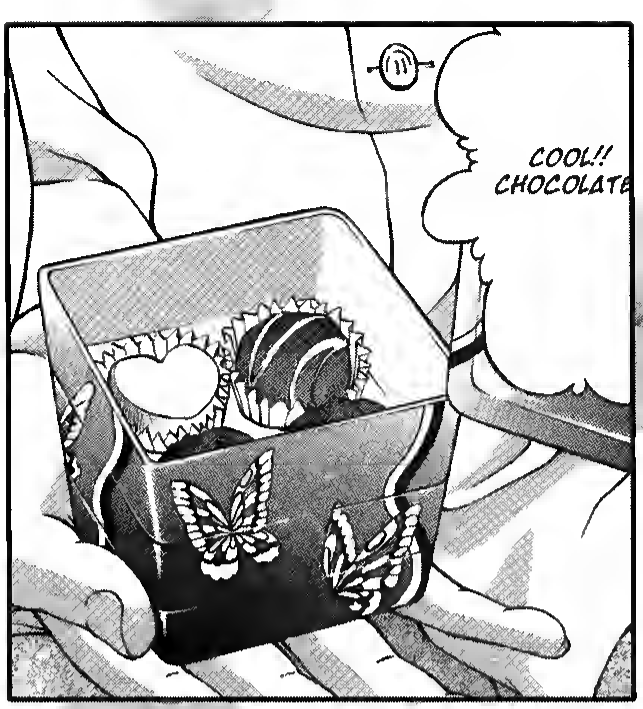


In Japan, where Christians make up less than .5% of the population, the Christmas holiday is completely secular, and new, uniquely Japanese traditions have formed around it. Christmas Cake, which Kaoru takes a job selling and Aoi and Miyabi are seen eating, is perhaps the most common tradition. The confection is basically glorified strawberry shortcake, being composed of shortcake topped with whip cream strawberries. Another tradition is the romantic significance of Christmas Eve. Rather than being a time for family or community, Christmas Eve is a time to show your special someone how you really feel.

New Year's



New Year's (or *shougatsu*) is one of the most important events of the year in Japan. It's celebrated by a three-day holiday, ushered in by ringing temples bells at midnight on New Year's Eve. For many Japanese, no New Year's is complete without a customary first temple visit, called *Hatsumoude*. Soba noodles are the New Year's Eve food of choice, while decorative box meals called osechi ryori and ozoni (a soup with mochi) are traditional eats for the three-day holiday. Each item in a osechi set is meant to symbolize a wish for the new year, such as *ebi* (shrimp) for long life or *kobu-maki* (seaweed roll) for happiness.



Valentine's Day

As with Christmas, the Japanese have embraced the Valentine's Day holiday and made it their own. In fact, the idea of a holiday based on buying gifts for the opposite sex was so popular that they split it into *two* holidays. On February 14th, Valentine's Day, girls give "gift chocolate" to boys. It can be a romantic, or just a friendly gesture to classmates and coworkers. One month later on March 14th is White Day, when boys return the gesture by giving candies to the girls. As reciprocation is very important in Japanese society, one should always give back a gift of equal or slightly greater value.

Hanami

Hanami is the ritual of viewing cherry blossoms. Going with friends or family to view the first *sakura* blooms of spring is an extremely popular pastime. Visitors to parks and shrines vie for the perfect spot from which to view the flowers and share picnics, sake and song.

NOTE: The Japanese word for cherry blossoms is sakura, and uses the same kanji character as is in the Sakuraba's name. That's why here family's department stores have a cherry blossom logo.